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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to write an ethnographic description of how the influences of the reader's culture and the culture depicted in a text are associated with the responses of first-semester college freshmen to a series of contemporary Appalachian short stories. Cultural backgrounds of six informants and the cultures depicted in six stories were determined, and findings were related to the informants' oral and written responses. Results indicated that culture has the potential of being a resource as well as a constraint in how readers interact with a text. Findings also revealed that various components of individual cultural backgrounds appear to have a greater influence on the ways readers take meanings from text and the kinds of responses that result than do the cultural elements of the text itself. Readers who are more familiar with the culture depicted in a text may experience more initial interest in the selection than those who have had no contact with it; but as they continue interacting with the work, their own cultural backgrounds become the dominant influence on what they observe, what meanings they obtain, and what responses they experience. (Ten tables of data are included. Appendixes include survey forms, an excerpt from a transcribed interview, an ethnographic record sheet, an example of a domain analysis worksheet, domain lists for stories, summary overviews of stories, and cultural scenes of the stories. Sixty-seven references are attached.) (MG)

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AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF CULTURAL INFLUENCES ON THE RESPONSES OF COLLEGE FRESHMEN TO CONTEMPORARY APPALACHIAN SHORT STORIES

by

John C. Baker, Jr.

Dissertation submitted to the faculty of the
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

in

Curriculum and Instruction

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An Ethnographic Study of Cultural Influences on the Responses of College Freshmen to Contemporary Appalachian Short Stories

by

John C. Baker

Committee Chairman: Robert C. Small
Curriculum and Instruction

(ABSTRACT)

Previous research on the role that culture plays in reader response to literature generally has not been based on clear operational definitions of the term "culture." More often than not, researchers appear to be using the term synonymously with the reader's race, nationality, or social class, rather than including specific anthropological explanations. Moreover, there has been no research reported that isolates and then studies individual readers' cultural backgrounds as influences on their responses to American regional literature; and, while there have been some studies reported that use ethnographic methodology to examine how cultural context or setting affects response, there has been no reported ethnographic research that focuses on the influences of readers' cultural backgrounds and the cultures depicted in texts.

The purpose of my study was to write an ethnographic description of how the influences of the reader's culture and the culture depicted in a text are associated with the responses of first-semester college freshmen to a series of contemporary Appalachian short stories. Using anthropological interpretations of culture and ethnographic data collection and analysis procedures, I determined the cultural backgrounds of six informants, as well as the cultures depicted in six stories, and related these findings to the informants' oral and written responses.

My study reveals that, as an influence on response, culture has the potential of being a resource as well as a constraint in how readers interact with a text. The findings from the study also indicate that the various components of their cultural backgrounds appear to have a greater influence on the ways readers take meanings from a text and the kinds of responses that result than do the cultural elements of the text itself. I found that readers who are familiar with the culture depicted in a text may experience more initial interest in the selection than those who have had no contact with it; but, as they continue interacting with the work, their own cultural backgrounds become the dominant influence on what they observe, what meanings they obtain, and what responses they experience. In the final analysis, my findings show that the responses of the readers who were familiar with the culture of the texts used in the study were not necessarily different from those of the readers from other cultural backgrounds.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

One of the most important tasks--and indeed one of the most exciting experiences--for the teacher of literature is to observe the various types of reader responses that occur when a group of students encounters a written text. Having been taught literature and then trained to be an English teacher within the traditions of the New Criticism movement, I did not until recent years come to base my teaching in the literature classroom on those rich personal experiences that students can have with a literary selection. This pedagogical change, resulting from my study of the work of Louise Rosenblatt and other response theorists, combined with my interest in literature dealing with the Southern Appalachian region of the United States, has led me especially to observe what is happening with my own college-level students when they read Appalachian fiction. As in any classroom, each of my students possesses special skills, personality traits, and experiential backgrounds; but teaching in a college also allows me to come in contact with classes that contain a diversity of cultural backgrounds, some similar to the cultures found in the assigned fiction and others very different.

Experiencing such classroom environments has resulted in my formulating the general purpose of this study: to investigate how the cultural influences on college-level readers affect and help to shape the responses that they have to selections from a body of literature that depicts a specific geographic region.

The Need for This Study

The serious attention that educators and researchers have given to literary response during the past twenty years points to the complexity of the transactions that take place when students experience a written text. Rosenblatt (1938/1983) wrote fifty years ago that "the teacher of literature needs much insight into the complex nature of the literary experience" (p. 30); however, not until the 1970s and 80s has the literary experience as she defined it received real attention.

In her explanation, a literary transaction occurs when "The reader actively creates meaning under guidance of . . . printed symbols" (1985a, p. 37). The transactional process is a reciprocal one, with both the text and the reader important active elements.

The kind of reading with which my study deals is what Rosenblatt calls the "aesthetic" transaction (1978, 1982, 1985a, 1985b). As opposed to efferent reading, which results in the reader's acquiring information and being more informed after the reading is completed, aesthetic reading has to do with what happens to the reader during his or her encounter with a text. With the aesthetic stance, a reader's "attention is turned toward what is immediately lived-through in transaction with the text, toward what is being shaped as the story or the poem" (1982, p. 271).

The transaction results in the reader's evocation of the literary work--what Rosenblatt terms the "poem." Referring to any literary work of art, the "poem" is that new experience which the reader elicits in a transaction with a text. In the transactional theory no "poem" is the correct one; rather, as Rosenblatt explains this essential aspect of her theory,

> Criteria of completeness, consistency, and coherence . . . permit us to decide that one evocation "did greater justice to the text" than another reading of it: the work evoked by a reader may not account for all of the text, or may include elements not referable to the text. But, of course, various interpretations might be equally acceptable. (1985a, p. 36)

As important to my study as the works evoked by the reader-subject is each reader's response to the re-created work. Responses result when "A concurrent stream of feelings, attitudes, and ideas is aroused by the very work being summoned up under guidance of the text" (Rosenblatt, 1978, p. 48). Occurring both during and after the transaction, the responses a reader can experience can vary as much in quantity as in their nature. As Rosenblatt (1985a) explains,

> The range of potential response and the gamut of degrees of intensity and articulateness are infinitely vast, since they depend not only on the character of the text but even more on the specific character of the individual reader. (p. 49)

Finally, in the transactional theory of reading, interpretation, rather than being an identification of the meaning of a text, is the reader's own process of reflecting on and then describing "the nature of the lived-through evocation of the work" (Rosenblatt, 1978, p. 70).

This process of reflecting and describing, Rosenblatt also notes, can be affected in a classroom setting by other readers' expressed responses and by the teacher's strategies in handling group discussion. Rosenblatt emphasizes that the teacher's role in a discussion is not to lead students to a consensus of interpretations but to help them identify "criteria of validity of interpretation" (1985a, p. 49). Summing up the purpose of group sharing of responses, she states, "Clarification of the criteria that are being applied . . . is the basis for critical communication" (p. 49).

Influences on reader response, including personality, age difference, reading ability, stages of cognitive development, and attitude have all become the focus of numerous research studies. Included in the literature on response research is also much attention to the influences of students' "background knowledge," "learning histories," "prior knowledge," and "past social and emotional experiences." However, as Beach (1983) has noted, although research has shown that prior knowledge and attitudes do influence the reading act, the research is scarce on (1) how reader responses are shaped by what students do or do not know when they begin reading a text and (2) how the individual's thought processes link prior knowledge with the content of a literary work.

Petrosky (1985) explains this "linking" of reader and text as a multidimensional "interactive" process involving internal influences on response, such as the reader's past experiences and developmental characteristics, and external influences such as culture and instruction. These two groups of influences, he explains, "act in conjunction with each other in ways that are not always predictable" (p. 71). Such unpredictability and the complex nature of reader response create a need for additional research that addresses "as many relevant features as possible, including what we already know about these features (such as developmental traits) from other areas of research in order to formulate more and more complete theories of reader response . . ." (p. 72).

In two of her more recent discussions, Rosenblatt (1985a, 1985b) has also recognized the limitations in our understanding the response process but within the framework of her transactional theory of reading. She writes,

> We need to delve more deeply than has thus far been done into the processes by which the reader creates the poem or story or play in transaction with the cues offered by the text. (1985a, p. 44)

Further research is needed, she goes on to say, that

> would lead to analysis of the role of what the reader brings to the text, in terms of past linguistic, literary, and life experiences, assumptions, and expectations, and of present preoccupations. The cumulative effect of earlier instruction in reading and literature especially should be recognized. (p. 45)

What Rosenblatt is describing are elements from the reader's culture that will determine the nature of his or her literary response. In an earlier discussion (1978), she defined more directly the cultural influence on the response process:

> As members of a particular culture or of a particular subculture or social group, [readers] have absorbed concepts governing the nature of literary arts, the satisfactions to be sought, the conventions to be observed, the qualities to be admired. Not only the family but also the schools, the radio and television, the newspapers and magazines propagate many of the value concepts that each reader brings to the text. (p. 152)

Purves has also expressed the need for research on culture as an influence on reader response. In a discussion on how variations in age affect responses, Purves (1985) describes a study he conducted in which a group of young readers of about 12 years read the same story as a group of 25 year olds. In the story a father narrates an incident involving his son and another family. In responding to the story the younger group of readers focused their attention on the son while the older group's responses centered on the father-narrator. Purves notes that the difference in responses could be due to experience with literature; but the young readers' tendency to identify with characters their own age could, he explains, also account for their responses. Purves relates other research findings that show how age influences readers' responses to questions about a text. He describes how the younger children in a study he conducted answered questions about their reading with very specific details as opposed to the generalizations used by older readers. Purves ends this discussion on age as a source of variation in responses by asking, "Do sex and culture play roles similar to that of age?" His own immediate reply is "Such a question deserves study" (p. 67). As a commentary on the need for additional research, Purves' consideration of these other influences on response is even more significant when it is noted that thirteen years earlier, he and Beach (1972) had concluded from their review of the research in response to literature that

> . . . we still know little about the relationship between interest and understanding, between personality and understanding or response, and between the environment of the student and response. (p. 20)

I have concluded from the literature on response theory and research, and specifically from the important work of Beach, Petrosky, Rosenblatt, and Purves, that further research is needed that investigates how readers' cultural experiences affect their responses to literature at specific stages in their development. Furthermore, I have determined that a research design having to do with cultural influences must begin with a clear explanation of the researcher's use of the term "culture," a word that "refers to a body of phenomena of staggering complexity" (Swartz and Jordan, 1976, p. 3). An examination of references to culture in the literature on reader comprehension and response reveals that the use of the term often varies from one study to another; and in some studies there is no clear operational definition of the term at all. More often than not, these studies cause the reader to conclude that culture is synonymous with the subjects' race, nationality, or social class. From an anthropological and ethnographic perspective, such a conception of culture is not sufficient.

The use of "culture" in the field of anthropology further illustrates the importance of establishing for a research study how the term will be used. According to Keesing (1972), theorists have developed over 160 delineations of culture. There is, however, agreement among anthropologists that culture is a concept dealing with the way of life of a people and that it is acquired and not genetically determined; but, similar to its use in the comprehension and response literature, definitions of the term in different anthropological studies have tended to stress one aspect of culture over others. For example, some definitions emphasize culture as made up of learned behavior patterns; others focus on structural aspects, such as social groups; while other definitions, now seen by anthropologists as unacceptable because they do not address the diversity of cultural sub-groups, look at culture in terms of race or of a specific nation, such as "French" or "American" culture (Aceves, 1974, pp. 60-61).

For my study, I used several anthropological perspectives on culture to develop a conceptual framework based on the following explanations of three types of culture that can simultaneously affect reader response. My study focused on two of three types of cultural influence. There is, first, the Reader's Culture. In the ethnographic context, an explanation of the reader's culture can be based on Spradley's (1980) definition of culture: "the acquired knowledge people use to interpret experience and generate behavior" (p. 6). Spradley calls the organizations of learned patterns of behavior and knowledge that have meaning for people within a social situation "cultural scenes" (1980, p. 87). More specifically, a cultural scene has to do not with what actually happens within a social situation but with people's conceptions and interpretations that, linked together, result in an organized series of cultural meanings. In my study I investigated readers' cultural scenes as influences on their responses to literature.

The second influence I investigated was the Text's Culture. A fictional text can be viewed as a representation of experience communicated through various perspectives or voices (Marcus and Fischer, 1986). The text depicts a cultural scene that becomes a kind of outline or blueprint for the reader. As Berleant (1970) explains, during the reading event "The reader colors in the outlines" and "give[s] content to the literary variables which appear in the unavoidable abstractions of language" (p. 99). The text recounts how cultural objects, practices, and beliefs influence human experience (Berleant, 1970); however, as a literary representation of experience, it is more than an aggregate of these cultural elements. A text also involves "shifts of focus, of attention, of orientation--in short, . . . the epistemological conditions operative in the work" (Gelley, 1979, p. 417). From an ethnographic perspective, such shifts within a text can be thought of as "an interplay of voices--all "clamor[ing] for expression" (Clifford, 1986, pp. 12, 15). Encountering the voices of a fictional text allows the reader to enter what Spradley and McDonough (1973) call the "inner world" of its characters, leading the reader to participate in -- and respond to -- cultures "from the inside out" (p. xv). In experiencing the culture of a text, "The reader," Spradley and McDonough further note, "is left with the same task faced by every ethnographer: to analyze the implicit categories and cultural rules that people are using to organize their behavior" (p. xv).

Although it was not a component of my investigation in this study, the Reading Event's Culture needs to be considered as yet another influence on reader response to literature. Rosenblatt (1985a, 1985b) describes the reading event as the actual "coming-together of a particular personality and a particular text at a particular time and place under particular circumstances" (1985b, p. 104). Spradley's (1980) definition of a social situation applies to a reading event: "the stream of behavior (activities) carried out by people (actors) in a particular location (place)" (p. 86). The researcher can both observe and participate in the reading event as a social situation, which can range from a private reading of a text with no anticipated follow-up to a reading in a large-group setting where specific instructions and an awareness of teacher and group members' expectations accompany the reading assignment, to discover cultural scenes. As a cultural scene, the reading event, using Spradley's distinction between social situation and cultural scene, has to do with the patterns of learned behavior and knowledge that emerge from the social situation and thus becomes yet another influence on reader response.

Because it allowed for inquiry into the two aspects of culture that my study involved, I selected an ethnographic design for my research. Spradley (1980) defines ethnography as "the work of describing a culture" (p. 3). Describing the use of ethnography in research in literature and reading, Kantor, Kirby, and Goetz (1981) explain how the ethnographic approach can result in an "explication of the dynamic interplay among elements in the physical, natural, and socio-cultural environments" that is "crucial to understanding and explaining what people do" (p. 296). They also note that ethnographic research is appropriate for studies on response to literature because of its emphasis on "discovering and elaborating upon specific features of context" (p. 196). Along with Kantor, Kirby, and Goetz, Rosenblatt (1985a, 1985b) stresses the need for more ethnographic studies in response research. She describes this type of research as "especially congenial to research problems involving the transactional view of language and literature" (1985a, p. 50).

The conclusions that I drew from examining the literature on response and ethnographic research methodology set the stage for my study. A review of the related literature showed that few studies of the nature called for by the response theorists cited above have been reported. Research in reader response that deals with cultural influences has focused mainly on how readers' nationalities affect their comprehension of and response to texts depicting cultures other than their own. No research has been reported that isolates and then studies students' cultural backgrounds as influences on their responses to American regional literatures such as Appalachian. Furthermore, while there have been a few studies reported that use ethnographic methodology as defined by Spradley (1979, 1980), Goetz and LeCompte (1984), and Erickson (1986) to examine the cultural context in which literary response occurs, there has been no strictly ethnographic research that represents the readers' cultural backgrounds and the cultures depicted in texts as influences on reader response. Also in this study I used Spradley's (1980) system of ethnographic analysis and Erickson's (1986) analytic narrative methodology, types of content analysis that have not previously been reported as methods for analyzing reader response to literature.

Finally, my study not only reveals subtle evidence of how culture influences reader response but also contributes to the current ethnographic interest in regional identity. Writing about this interest, Marcus and Fischer (1986) state that, although some regional identities have remained more pronounced and unchanged than others, they all

> unambiguously arise from situated territorial and political divisions to which a strong collective sense of history unavoidably attaches itself. . . . A return to local culture, and to some degree, the past, upon which the appeal of regional identity depends, is an ideal topic for a critical ethnography which seeks to expose the ways the notion of culture itself is conceived as a commonplace concept, deeply implicated in the political economy of contemporary American society. (p. 156)

Marcus and Fischer's commentary applies directly to Appalachia. It is, therefore, possible that a study based on the ethnographic reporting of culturally distinctive informants' responses to literary depictions of a regional identity can provide a new route for ethnographic researchers to represent and validate authentic cultural realities.

Overview of The Study

Chapter 1 has presented the need for the study, the rationale, and conceptual framework that establishes reader response as a process that can be influenced by readers' cultural backgrounds, cultures in the texts being read, and cultural scenes in which reading events take place. The conceptual framework for the study will be further developed and supported by a review of related literature and research in Chapter 2. Following the standard ethnographic research design, Chapter 3 will describe the methodology of the study. Chapter 4 will contain the findings for each of the study's research questions. The conclusions of the study and implications for further research will be discussed in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

To explain and illustrate the type of conceptual framework I have established for this study of cultural influences on readers' responses to a regional literature, I chose to review literature from the following areas: (1) theoretical background on the process of reader response, (2) factors that affect reader response, (3) schema theory and reader response, and (4) theory and research on the cultural factors in reader comprehension and response.

Theoretical Background on the Process of Reader Response

Richards' (1929/1960) "experiment" (p. 3) in which a group of his students at Cambridge University read and wrote about poems whose authors and dates of composition were unidentified resulted in the initial research study of what is known as response to literature. Richards' "astonishment" (p. 4) at the results of the experiment led him to conclude that a reader's sole reliance on his or her own "personal situation" (p. 239) in reading and interpreting a poem generally interferes with the correct understanding of the work. Unlike Rosenblatt and other response theorists who have followed her, Richards saw the individual reader's perceptions as possible "dangers" (p. 239); however, because his research was the first to call serious attention to the reader's role in the literary experience, Richards' work has been labeled "the master study" (Purves and Beach, 1972, p. ix) in the field of response to literature. Although this work deals with responses to poetry, Richards' findings remain a standard point of departure for research in all types of literary response, with my study being no exception.

Richards identified "obstacles and causes of failure in the reading and judgment of poetry" (1929/1960, p. 17). His contention was that the perceptions of individual readers hampered their efforts to grasp the fixed meanings of poetry texts. His list of obstacles includes the following factors that can interfere with a successful reading of a text: (1) memories and emotions triggered by a reading of a poem, (2) preconceived ideas and views, (3) personal convictions and doctrines which a poem may contradict or oppose, and (4) preconceptions of how poetry should be defined and what technical characteristics it should contain.

Although Rosenblatt (1938/1983) acknowledges and further discusses the possible effects of Richards' obstacles in the reading act, her emphasis is not on the problematic influence of the reader but on his or her importance as a participant in the reading event. Rosenblatt established a transactional theory of reading literature that, unlike Richards' perspective, views the reader and the text as equally important factors whose interaction results in the creation of a literary work. Richards' New Criticism definition of a poem, story, or play was one in which the work was an object for readers to examine closely for analytical purposes. Their own personal responses had no place in this process. For Rosenblatt, however, a literary work exists and has meaning only when a reader interacts with a text--the object on the page. The reader, then, while still capable of affecting the literary transaction with any one of the influences identified by Richards, is still to be looked at as an essential element in the reading event.

The most influential study that extended both Richards' and Rosenblatt's discussions of literary response was conducted by Squire (1964). His research on the reactions of ninth and tenth graders while they read short stories was conducted not only to provide a description of the responses of the subjects to the stories they read but also to describe the process of the development of their responses during the reading of the selections. As a valuable illustration of the Richards and Rosenblatt theses, Squire's research design also sought (1) "to relate [the subjects'] responses to the intelligence, socio-economic backgrounds, reading abilities, and other personal characteristics of the reader" and (2) "to analyze the factors which limit and constrict the responses of these readers and thus create barriers to sound interpretations of literature" (pp. 1-2). Squire's research is especially important to the conceptual framework of my study because of his recognition of the need to study the responses of readers "with radically different backgrounds" (p. 52). Moreover, his study revealed that individual experiences and personal predispositions do influence response. Of importance also is his finding that ". . . readers respond to literature in unique and selected ways and that the nature of an individual's reactions is conditioned by the dynamic interplay of a constellation of factors rather than by single causes" (p. 51).

In order to describe the subjects' complete processes of responding to stories, Squire divided each story into segments and recorded the free responses to each segment and finally to the complete story. He categorized the responses into seven areas which have become the basis for the development of various methods for analyzing response:

1. Literary Judgments: Direct or implied judgments on the story as an artistic work, including such generalized comments as "It's effective" or "It's good," where the statement appeared to refer to the literary or aesthetic qualities, rather than to judgment on specific situations in the story. Also, specific reactions to language, style characterization.
2. Interpretational Responses: Reactions in which the reader generalizes and attempts to discover the meaning of the stories, the motivational forces, and

> the nature of the characters, including references to evidence from the stories marshalled to support interpretational generalizations. Three types are found: interpretations of characters or plot, interpretations of ideas and themes, visual reconstructions of scenes which seemed to represent visual interpretation of specific facts.
>
> 3. Narrational Reactions: Responses in which the reader reports details or facts in the story without attempting to interpret. This factual retelling may occur when the reader has difficulty in comprehending.
> 4. Associational Responses: Responses in which the reader associated ideas, events, or places, and people with his own experience other than the association of a character with himself. These associations are direct, e.g., "This is like my home" or inverse, e.g., "These are not like my home."
> 5. Self-involvement: Responses in which the reader associates himself with the behavior and/or emotions of characters. These range in degree from slight to intense and may be expressed through identification or rejection.
> 6. Prescriptive Judgements: Responses in which the reader prescribes a course of action for a character based on some absolute standard, e.g., "She ought to do this," "He must do this."
> 7. Miscellaneous: Responses which were not coded elsewhere. (pp. 17-18)

Another aspect of Squire's research that is significant to my study is the data he provides that show sources of difficulty that adolescent readers encounter when interpreting short stories. These six sources derive from (1) comprehension difficulties, such as misunderstanding key words and making incorrect inferences; (2) difficulties stemming from stock or stereotypical responses; (3) misinterpretations resulting from an overemphasis on finding the pleasant and good in any story read; (4) prejudgments of the worth of a selection because of the reader's critical predisposition; (5) uncontrolled personal associations with elements in a story that distract the reader and distort response; and (6) misinterpretations resulting from efforts to experience an immediate clear and complete understanding of a story.

Squire's "picture of the extended psychological events of responding to a short story" (p. 52) gives credence to the transactional theory of reading by its emphasis on the process of response from initial encounter with a text to the end of the reading.

Using Squire's "breakage technique" of dividing a text into sections and examining separately the series of responses, Angelotti (1972) studied the responses of 68 eighth-grade students to two novels, one adult and one junior. Purves and Rippere's (1968) revision of Squire's categories of response was the basis of analysis of the students' responses. Of the Purves-Rippere categories--Engagement-involvement, Perception, Evaluation, Interpretation and Miscellaneous--Angelotti found that the most frequent responses to the adult novel, A Separate Peace, were perception statements; the most frequent type of response to the junior novel, Tuned Out, was interpretive. These findings show that the understanding a reader has of the content of a text is a major determinant of the mode of response he or she will have to the work. Where the Purves-Rippere category of perception refers to a reader only identifying the characteristics of a work and describing its plot, the interpretation category records a reader's inferences that he or she draws from the work and what the reader generalizes beyond it. Secondly, the study showed that the subjects' reactions to the content of the two novels were more dominant than their reactions to the form of the selections. And as in Squire's research, Angelotti found that response to a literary work involves a process where readers go through stages of reviewing and modifying their reactions.

Beach's (1973) study of the response process of college-level readers provides another dimension to the framework of my study. Similar to the research of Squire and Angelotti, Beach elicited and then analyzed students' free-association responses. However, Beach's study also focused on the subjects' responses to a series of successive re-readings of the same text. Using a modification of the Purves-Rippere analysis categories, Beach compared the types of private responses of his subjects to their responses to the same work in an unstructured group discussion. The same procedure was repeated three times, using three different poems. The data revealed that "The subjects tended to respond in the discussions as they had on the [individual] assignments" (p. 100). "One reason for this," Beach concluded, "was [that] subjects often restated their previous thoughts; their discussion responses were a carbon copy of their assignment responses" (p. 100). A second finding was that the subjects "tended to employ a consistent cognitive style" (p. 101) in their responses to the poems read; that is, in both the private and group response sessions, the subjects' strategies of response, such as engagement, perception, interpretation, or evaluation, remained relatively consistent no matter what poem they were reading. Third, re-reading of and continuous responding to the poems "provided an experience which could be recalled more easily than thoughts from only one reading" (p. 101). Fourth, the study showed that the readers' overall response process involved a series of stages, beginning with the initial private readings and continuing through the group discussions.

Beach, however, did note some differences in the private and public responses. In their private responses the readers referred to more specifics in the poems; the public responses contained more summary statements. Also, some of the subjects' public responses went beyond simply restating the original private responses. Beach attributes this change to attitude, that is "whether group members were willing to collaborate and collectively build on their responses or whether each merely restated his assignment [private] responses without the desire to collaborate" (p. 101). In addition, the study suggests that the context in which reading takes place affects the individual reader's response strategies. For example, group pressures and attitudes were found to influence strategies. Finally, Beach's study confirms the complexity of the response process both in terms of a reader's private interaction with a text and within group discussions.

Beach's definition of the response process as a progression through various stages relates to Iser's (1978) aesthetic theory of response. Iser sees a literary work as having two poles, the artistic and the aesthetic. He explains that

> The artistic pole is the author's text and the aesthetic is the realization accomplished by the reader. In view of this polarity, it is clear that the work itself cannot be identical with the text . . . but must be situated somewhere between the two . . . . As the reader passes through the various perspectives offered by the text and relates the different views and patterns to one another he sets the work in motion, and so sets himself in motion, too. (p. 21)

In Iser's theory of response, the reader, as he or she "passes through" a text, encounters "blanks" or "gaps" which must be filled in by the reader imagining events and actions. According to Iser, "The gaps function as a kind of pivot on which the whole text-reader relationship revolves" (p. 169). Iser incorporates schema theory into this filling-in process and emphasizes that schemata guide the reader's creative imagination in not only shaping the aesthetic aspect of the literary work but also in anticipating the direction in which the text will progress.

The gaps or blanks that the readers experience stimulate them to draw upon their knowledge and past experiences. Also important in Iser's theory is his description of the reader who, upon beginning to read a text, actively becomes involved in the "process of synthesizing an assembly of constantly shifting viewpoints, which not only modify one another but also influence past and future syntheses" (p. 97).

In explaining the response process, Iser, in contrast to other theorists, defines a reader's response as the total accumulation of responses that occur throughout a reading event. During the process the reader is continually re-evaluating and re-structuring his or her responses. This concept of response leads Iser to conclude that "It is therefore difficult, if not impossible, to isolate individual phases of this process and call them meaning of the text, because the meaning in fact stretches over the whole course of ideation" (p. 148).

In the response process descriptions presented by Rosenblatt, Squire, Beach, and Iser, the interaction of a text and its reader concerns the equally important roles of these two active elements. Other response theorists, however, have given more attention and significance to the reader as the key factor in the act of responding and creating meaning. Such attention to the reader can be described as a movement opposite to the view of reading represented by the New Critics who demanded the objective reading of a text, unaffected by the character of the individual reader. Bleich's (1975, 1978, 1985) discussions of response center on what he calls "the reader's subjective perception" (1975, p. 21). In Bleich's explanation of this subjective approach to response, the reading event is a time when an individual explores the emotions, thoughts, and feelings that arise when he or she experiences a literary work. The work becomes the readers' subjective re-creation, resulting from three types of response: first, the reader describes what has been read, then describes the personal effect of the reading, and finally expresses those personal associations the text brings to mind. The third type of response, Bleich explains, "is the most complex but the most useful form of expressing feelings about literature" (1975, p. 48). Bleich believes that the associative response, more than the perception and affective responses, illustrates how the reader's personality, present preoccupations and "aggregate self-image" (p. 48) determine his or her subjective response to a literary work.

Bleich's theory also includes the necessity of readers sharing their responses to a text in a "communal" setting. Through this experience they not only achieve an understanding of the text but, by reaching a consensus of interpretations, acquire knowledge. Throughout this process the text remains inactive, with the reader giving meaning to the text through the vehicle of his or her own perceptual, emotional, and associative experiences.

Another response theorist who recognizes the reader as the primary agent in the response process is Holland (1975). Unlike Bleich, Holland sees the text as an active element through which the reader can creatively build a literary experience. Using a psychoanalytic approach, Holland analyzed the responses of college students to a series of short stories. His research led to the development of a transactive theory of response based on the following principle:

> A reader responds to a literary work by assimilating it to his own psychological processes, that is, to his search for successful solutions within his identity theme to the multiple demands, both inner and outer, on his ego. (p. 209)

The identity theme to which Holland refers is that unique "lifestyle," "personality," or "ego identity" (p. 57) which affects all aspects of the behavior of an individual. From his research Holland found that students shape the meaning of texts by projecting their own identity theme, in the form of a wish-fulfilling fantasy, into the stories they were reading. The text provides the reader with the materials to create the fantasy that he or she will project back upon the text; however, at the heart of Holland's theory is the creative potential of the personality of the reader.

Summary

The above theoretical explanations reveal a continuing emphasis on the complex nature of reader response to literature. Theorists also continue to give different emphases and purposes to the roles of reader and text; and the evidence of so many possible types of response process, ranging from Richards' problematic influences on the reading of a text to Holland's fantasy projection, adds yet another dimension to my conceptual framework for research in literary response.

Factors That Affect Reader Response

Contributing to the complexity of reader response is the large number of factors that can affect the reading event. In this section of the literature review I will discuss a series of empirical studies that deal with influences on response. Three of these studies provide an overview of this aspect of reader response.

Purves' (1973) cross-national survey of literature education in nine countries identified a number of influences on adolescent readers' patterns of responses to short stories. Patterns of response refer to how readers express thoughts about what they have read, such as evaluative and aesthetic responding. A finding in this empirical study, involving over a thousand students, was that the patterns of response are dependent on the text being read and on the age and nationality of the reader. Moreover, Purves identified reading ability, home and socioeconomic background, and the cumulative effect of schooling to account for differences in response. In terms of the interest a student has in reading, Purves noted that his research revealed "little in school that affects a student's interest in literature," but added that he found "a great deal of variance unexplained" (p. 313).

Culture, defined by Purves as "the socioeconomic character and reading resources of the [reader's] community" (p. 312), was also found to influence students' response patterns. "A pattern of response," Purves explains, "is an artifact of a student's culture" (p. 314); and in looking at response as learned behavior, Purves sees the student's school experience--the "inculcator" of his or her culture--as an influence on response. However, as with the interest variable, "A great deal of variance [concerning school] remains unexplained" (p. 312).

Another study from the 1970s that identified variables in the responses of adolescents to literature was conducted by Petrosky (1975). Using case studies, Petrosky concluded that five variables influenced the responses of his subjects: stage-specific operations or thought processes, personality patterns, past experiences, reader expectations, and reading ability. Petrosky found that thought processes and personality determine the cognitive and affective aspects of response. Second, like Purves, he labels response as a learned process, based on the finding that forms of response, such as expressing feelings and thoughts, are influenced by the expectations of a reader as to the questions he or she will be asked about literary works. Petrosky also discovered that variables interact with each other; however, thought processes, personality, and past experiences were found to be the dominant influences.

In a third and more recent study, Clayton (1980) analyzed the responses of four college-level readers to four short stories. Viewing the reader and the text as equally important elements in response, Clayton focused on two areas: (1) the subjects' interpersonal behavior and attitude toward fiction and (2) the stories' stylistics and points of view. Using four separate word-count divisions for each story, Clayton elicited from her subjects written responses to each segment. One week later, the subjects responded to the complete stories. This procedure was used to achieve a complete picture of how response develops. Response analysis involved (1) close observation of the reader's interpersonal behavior, using Karen Horney's systematization of personality comparison approach and (2) comparison of the texts' characteristics to the readers' responses. Clayton found that the responses were influenced by textual style and that the points of view in the texts influenced perceptions of the stories' content. The study also showed that the style of a text contributes to the reader's attitude toward the work.

Clayton concludes that "because the textual domain is governed by point of view and style, and because response to it cannot be divorced from attitude or character of its maker" (p. ii), the character of the reader, the reader's attitude toward fiction, the text's point of view, and the style of the text need to be seen as the constituent variables in response.

Each of the above studies identified a series of interacting variables that can influence reader response. The following review of additional research, organized on the basis of text and reader influences, provides more insight into this aspect of the conceptual framework for my study. Research on the influences of past experience or schema and cultural factors, especially pertinent to my study, will be reviewed in separate sections of this chapter.

Influence of the Text on Literary Response

Golden (1979) conducted a study involving an analysis of the responses of fifth and eighth graders to realistic and fantasy short stories. Investigating textual influences as one component of her study, Golden found that the two different types of fiction placed different demands on the readers in terms of how they related to the texts and how they responded to them. With the fantasy story, readers had to agree to accept the "secondary world" the author created, while the realistic story did not demand this kind of commitment. The eighth-grade readers generally had more interpretive responses to the stories; the fifth graders gave more expressive responses. Furthermore, the fifth graders contributed more identification responses to the realistic story. Golden stresses that the text was a major influence in the types of responses the subjects produced.

Golden's argument finds support in a later study of the responses of college-level readers to short stories and poems (Zaharias, 1982). This quantitative study found no relationship among the subjects' sex, reading ability, and learning style preference and literary response. However, analysis of possible variables revealed that textual variation did influence the responses of the subjects.

Influence of the Reader on Literary Response

a. Age

Researchers agree that response is developmental and that readers display specific characteristics of literary response in the various stages of their lives (Petrosky, 1977).

A study illustrating this observation was conducted by Applebee (1976). The subjects were 248 students, ages 6 through 17. Using the Repertory Grid Technique as a means of observing how readers in their "spectator role" construe stories they have read, Applebee found that children generally have "a legacy of satisfaction" about reading which leads them to expect to enjoy what they read. Consequently, 6-year-olds, in tending to look at details in a story rather than considering the work as a whole, are likely to identify the endings of stories as sad or happy. By age 9, expectations of happy endings become more dominant, but by age 17 there is a shift to concern for the theme or meaning of stories.

Applebee also found that, as children become older, developmental changes affect their responses to what they read in the following areas:

> (1) evaluation becomes gradually more central and grows more tolerant of works which challenge the reader's views,
>
> (2) simplicity moves from an initial concern with reading difficulty and age-appropriateness to a later concern with the complexity and richness of books,
>
> (3) realism begins in a concern for whether stories are 'true' or 'made up' evolving later into judgment of the 'distance' which the reader perceives between himself and the work. (pp. 326-327)

Discussing the realism dimension of construal, Applebee notes that the older subjects' labeling of a diversity of stories as "real" or "based on fantasy" illustrates the complexity of judging works and "the personal nature of construing" (p. 234). For example, some of the older subjects saw as unrealistic such works as Macbeth, Doctor Doolittle, and Lord of the Rings; they saw The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner and Emma as realistic.

Applebee's explanation of how construing works is affected as the reader gets older finds some support in Higgins' (1987) study of the literary responses of 16 female college students, 8 of whom were over 55 years of age and 8 in the 18-22 range. Through qualitative methodology and content analysis of the subjects' responses to four short stories, Higgins found that, although the age of the reader was not an indicator of predictable response, the older readers tended to become more involved in the stories. The younger readers were more critical of the characters and more prescriptive in their solutions to the characters' problems. Somewhat inconsistent with Applebee's statement that older teenagers are apt to replace expectations of happy endings with more mature concerns for theme and meaning is Higgins' finding that her 18-22 year-old subjects were still predicting happy endings. Similar to Applebee, though, Higgins found few consistent patterns of response across groups and concluded that "response proved to be a highly individual literary transaction" (DAI, p. 1408-A).

b. Socioeconomic Background

Squire (1964) and Purves (1973) found that the socioeconomic status of adolescent readers was an influential factor in the ways they responded to literature. In my review of response research, I found one other study, this time including college-level readers, that supports Squire's and Purves' conclusions. Mertz (1973) collected, for purposes of comparison, data from a sample of 52

English teachers, 160 tenth-grade students, and 52 college students. After all the subjects read and responded to three short stories, their responses were analyzed using the Purves-Rippere categories. Referring to the student responses, Mertz reported that "Generally, a higher proportion of low socioeconomic students selected the Perception [category] for all three stories. More of the high socioeconomic groups chose the Interpretation and Evaluation categories in all three instances" (DAI, p. 6066-A). This finding is consistent with other research investigating the socioeconomic influence. It can be concluded that interpretative or inference-based response, as opposed to perception or objective response, tends to relate to a higher socioeconomic status, generally associated with more extensive background and literary experiences.

c. Personality

Holland's (1975) explanation of literary response as a reflection of the reader's personality or identity theme is the basis of Petrosky's (1976) study of how a reader's perception of reality and fantasy influence his or her response to fiction and poetry texts. Petrosky used case studies of Mary Kay and Kathy, ninth-grade students, to investigate how "reality perception and fantasy give both structure and content to a reader's literary response" (p. 240). Along with interviews and discussion sessions over a four-month period, Petrosky also used the Thematic Apprehension Test to obtain additional response data on the subjects' personal themes and approaches to human situations. After establishing complete descriptions of the readers' personal styles and themes and after a meticulous analysis of all the data, Petrosky concluded that

> the diversities in Mary Kay's and Kathy's responses reveal a powerful internal factor influencing their responses--a deep sense of identity. In Holland's terms, each reader recreates the literary works and TAT situations in her own style. This individual style is determined by how a reader perceives reality. (p. 255)

d. Intellectual Strategies

Another influence on literary response is the types of intellectual strategies or processes that the individual reader uses in formulating responses. Odell and Cooper (1976) used the Purves-Rippere method of describing responses to achieve a means of identifying the intellectual strategies that readers employ in their response processes. The researchers first examined one eleventh-grade above-average student's expressed responses to three novels. After analyzing the student's written responses, they applied an "heuristic procedure" based on the rhetorical theories of Young, Becker, and Pike to describe the intellectual processes John, the subject, used in responding to the novels. The procedure involved identifying in the student's responses evidence of the following areas of mental process: focus, contrast, classification, change, time sequence, logical sequence, and physical context. Odell and Cooper asked specific questions about each of these areas in order to acquire a complete picture of the strategies John did or did not use in responding to the novels.

The Odell and Cooper study shows that the intellectual processes readers are using during the response process do affect the kinds of responses they have to literature. The study also illustrates Purves' and Petrosky's observation that response is a learned behavior; it is Odell and Cooper's contention that, with the methodology presented in their study, readers can be taught how to increase their "repertoire" of ways to respond to literary texts.

Schema Theory and Reader Response

Research has also shown past experience and prior knowledge schemata to have a strong influence on a reader's response to a literary text.

Purves (1980) defined a reader as

> a person who has a complex set of schema to bring to bear on a text, who can willingly enter into seeing the text as an aesthetic object, who becomes involved with reading, and who emerges from reading with a willingness to enter into a complex analysis of transaction with the text. (p. 233)

Significantly, this definition begins with the recognition that a reading event can be successfully completed only if the reader possesses schema or "those cognitive or conceptual frames, scripts, or blueprints to a text that help [readers] sort out and organize information" (Beach, 1980, p. 94). Deriving from readers' experiential backgrounds, schemata were initially identified as important to the reading act in a series of research studies dealing with comprehension. Rumelhart (1977) developed a comprehension model based on the concept that readers can only understand a text if they have available to them the appropriate or related schema. Furthermore, Rumelhart stressed that comprehending any situation usually involves not one single schema, but "a set of interrelated schemata" (p. 267).

Adams and Bruce (1982) gave even greater emphasis to the role of prior knowledge schema in comprehending. In their psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic theory of reading comprehension, these researchers stressed that, if readers are to use their necessary inferential processes during the reading of a text, then "An absolute prerequisite for the reader is that she/he approach the text with firmly established and well articulated models of the social situations on which the narration pivots" (p. 12).

Traditionally, researchers have looked upon comprehension and responding to literature as separate processes; however, in the 1980s research studies have begun to emphasize reading comprehension and response to literature as not separate but complementary processes, primarily determined by the reader's past life experiences and literary experiences and preferences.

A study exploring this perspective on the two processes was conducted by Cullinan, Harwood, and Galda (1983). Placing emphasis on the importance of viewing both comprehension and responding "as a multilayered activity" (p. 33), these researchers studied the interaction between the ambiguity of texts and the background knowledge of readers. Their study involved nine boys and nine girls from grades 4, 6, and 8 and representing Italian, Jewish, Afro-American, and Puerto Rican ethnic groups. The subjects were interviewed about their concept of story, that is, "about the kinds of stories they liked to read, what they knew about a story, what they expect when they read a story, and what kinds of things usually happen in stories" (p. 33). Each subject then read either Bridge to Terabithia or Wizard of Earthsea, and the subjects' responses to the novels were then compared to the responses from the concept of story interviews. This procedure was used to see how each reader's stated concept of story compared to his or her revealed concept of story in the responses to the novels. The researchers found that reader response is an effective method for examining and understanding reading. "It is clear," they conclude, "that developmental trends have a strong influence on a reader's comprehension of a text and that these influences are determined by life experiences and literary experiences" (p. 37).

Beach's (1983) research has also shown that schemata affect and shape readers' responses. Focusing on prior knowledge of social and literary conventions, Beach compared the responses of 45 eleventh-grade English students and 45 junior and senior English education majors to John Updike's story "Tomarrow, Tomarrow, and So forth," a work depicting the difficulties an English teacher encounters with his class's study of Macbeth. The college education majors and the high school students differed in their knowledge of literature instruction strategies. Especially significant to the reading of the Updike story was that the college students had training in learning theory and response to literature. The high school students were only familiar with the conventions of classroom behavior. Beach found in examining the responses of the two groups that the kinds of knowledge the subjects had about teaching strategies, the teaching of literature, and about literary conventions, such as types of conflict and character motivation, did indeed influence their responses to the story. The findings of this study led Beach to develop a research model based on the following points:

1. Literary texts contribute to meaning by portraying unusual or extraordinary events that violate or reaffirm a reader's attitudes.
2. Whether or not a reader recognizes an event as unusual or extraordinary depends on the reader's own knowledge of conventions or norms that are being violated.
3. If a story revolves around defiance of appropriate conventions, a reader who is unfamiliar with these conventions will not be able to infer "meaning" in terms of implied goals, motives, beliefs and traits. (p. 51)

An earlier study (Anderson, Reynolds, Schallert, and Goez, 1977) provided additional insight into how schemata create for readers frameworks for comprehending texts. The researchers began the study with the following claims: (1) "that schemata provide the basis for filling gaps, the basis for inferential elaboration" and (2) "that high-level schemata tune people to see messages in certain ways" (p. 370). The subjects were 30 physical education students and 30 music education majors in a university. Each subject read prose passages that could be interpreted in more than one way. Analysis of the subject's interpretations showed that personal history, knowledge, and beliefs--the sources of "the schemata by which people attempt to assimilate text" (p. 378)--influenced the interpretations. In addition, the subjects gave each passage they read one distinct interpretation and reported being unaware of other possible perspectives while reading. Thus Anderson et al.'s findings suggest that schemata "can influence a person to impose one framework on a message, without deliberately or even subconsciously considering others" (p. 377).

Based on these findings, Anderson et al. discuss two important implications: (1) the problem of readers not possessing schemata needed to comprehend a text and (2) the problem of readers assimilating text to inappropriate or incomplete schemata. Rumelhart (1977) discusses these same problems and describes their effects on comprehension and on response. If, he explains, parts of a story do not relate to the schemata that a reader brings to the selection, then these parts likely "will be modified or deleted so that a good fit will be attained for the story as a whole" (p. 301).

The need for researchers in literary response to consider Anderson et al.'s and Rumelhart's research findings that incomplete or inappropriate schemata can result in a distorted reading of a text is even more apparent when the findings are related to the concept of "stock" responses to literature (Richards 1929/1960; Rosenblatt 1938/1983; Applebee 1978). Richards recognized that readers' past experiences can create for them preexisting responses that, on the one hand, help them understand and relate to literary depictions of conventional life activities. On the other hand, however, Richards saw stock responses as problematic when they "get in the way of, and prevent, a response more appropriate to the situation" (1929/1960, p. 24). Rosenblatt addresses the negative role stock responses play in the transaction a reader has with a text by explaining that readers often bring to a literary work "a fund of ready-made, sharply crystallized ideas and habits of response" (1938/1983, p. 97) stemming from their own experiences. Some of the examples Rosenblatt cites of factors that may encourage the development of stock responses are readers' rural or urban backgrounds, regional loyalties, and strong attitudes toward politics, religion, and family. She stresses that stock responses can lead to predetermined, narrow, or stereotypical interpretations of literature. Poetry and fiction, she explains, should bring about new insights; and rather than preventing readers from experiencing fully all that a literary work offers, prior experience should result in the reinterpretation of a reader's "old sense of things in the light of the new ways of thinking and feeling offered by the work of art" (p. 107).

Summary

Prior knowledge and prior experience have been found to influence readers' responses to literature in strong and diverse ways. These influences were recognized years ago in the work of Richards and Rosenblatt; however, the development of schema theory has given new insight into how experiential background determines reader response and has provided a tool for investigating and measuring the extent of this influence on the response process. Adding further to a conceptual framework for response research, the influence of prior knowledge and experience schemata on comprehension and response is a complex phenomenon which gives even more impetus to the uniqueness of any literary transaction.

Theory and Research on the Cultural Factors in Reader Comprehension and Response

In this section, I reviewed studies of the influences of cultural factors on reader comprehension and response. The purpose of this section was to support and further define the use of culture in the conceptual framework for my study.

Culture of the Reader and Culture of the Text

Recent reviews of schema research in reading (Andersson and Barnitz, 1984; Nelson, 1987) confirm the crucial roles that the reader's and the text's cultures play in reading comprehension. In addition, a continued emphasis in the reported studies is the need for teachers to facilitate comprehension by "bridging the gap" between the text's cultural content and the reader's cultural schemata or that mental organization of prior knowledge of and experience with a culture that provides a context for comprehension (Andersson and Barnitz, p. 103).

Reviewing these studies also reveals that researchers apply the term "culture" to a wide range of readers' "experiences with the world" (Andersson and Barnitz, p. 102). In Andersson and Barnitz's and Nelson's reviews of research on cross-cultural influences on reading comprehension, types of cultures include American, Black, urban, agricultural, Catholic, Indian, Egyptian, and Iranian. In one of these studies, Steffensen, Joag-Dev, and Anderson (1979) operationalize culture in terms of the way of life in the United States and in India. They sought to incorporate a research design that would identify only the influence of cultural content schemata and eliminate the problem of readers encountering foreign or unfamiliar texts that were inherently more difficult than those from their own native culture. To achieve their objective, the researchers chose as texts two letters describing a "well-suited" cross-cultural topic: the marriage ritual. One letter described an Indian wedding; the other, an American marriage ceremony. The Indian and American adults in the study all read their "native passages more rapidly, recalled a larger amount of information from the native passage, and produced more culturally based distortions of the foreign passage" (p. 10).

A second example of the use of culture in reading comprehension research is Schreck's (1981) investigation of whether readers from three American cultural groups would comprehend reading material containing familiar cultural content more easily than that containing unfamiliar content. Schreck designated as cultures Hispanic, Black, and White Americans. Fifth- and sixth-graders, representing each group, read prose passages depicting "content peculiar" to each culture. Responses to literal and inferential questions, free recall, and cloze performance showed that, as in the Steffensen et al. research, cultural familiarity facilitated comprehension and memory of the individual selections.

Culture is also broadly defined in research dealing with another type of cultural schemata. Not only do readers possess cultural content schemata but, because structures of story organization vary throughout the world, possess discourse or story schemata as well. Kintsch and Greene's (1978) work revealed that readers having cultural-specific story schemata wrote more informative and accurate summaries of stories that had organizational schema corresponding to their own. The subjects in the study were American college students; they read stories representing two culture-specific story schemata: (1) a conventional and familiar "European" cultural pattern involving the presence of a hero; causally and temporally related events; and episodes consisting of exposition, complication, and resolution and (2) a non-conventional Alaskan Indian cultural pattern characterized by abrupt changes in the hero, lack of causal-temporal connections between episodes, a structure based upon a principle of fours--four actors and four episodes. In addition to being more difficult to comprehend, the Indian stories, deviating from the subjects' familiar story schema also caused the subjects difficulty when they were asked to recall or reconstruct the selections.

Research also reveals that readers' cultural schemata have an impact on their responses to literature. Reviewing this research, I found that most of the studies, as with those dealing with the role of culture in reading comprehension, treat culture as a general phenomenon, usually in terms of the reader's nationality. A recent empirical study, for example, conducted by Lee (1985) focused on Korean and American college-level subjects. Lee's purpose was to determine what response pattern variations existed when Korean and American students read short stories from both cultures. Using the Purves-Rippere content analysis method, Lee found that the Korean and American students' response patterns did not change, no matter whether they were reading a Korean or American story. While the Korean readers had more responses in which they identified with the content of the stories (engagement), the American readers had more evaluative responses involving judgment of the stories, styles, effects, or importance. Lee explains this variation in response as a reflection of cultural values or those personal qualities that a group looks upon as most important for its members to possess. Emotionalism, indirectness, and collectivism, he states, are valued in the Korean culture; rationalism, directness, and individualism are emphasized in the American culture.

In an earlier study, Noda (1980) compared Japanese and American readers' responses to Japanese short stories. In establishing the research design of this study, Noda, first, selected a native Japanese subject who had spent less than one year in the United States. The American subject was chosen primarily on the basis of his unfamiliarity with Japanese culture and literature. Second, Noda identified 14 "cultural features" in the stories and had them validated by a panel of experts in Japanese culture. These features became the focus of the interviews conducted with the subjects. Differentiating between cultural and universal features in the stories, Noda reported that both readers responded similarly to the universal features; however, the American reader responded at a lower level of specificity to the cultural features than did the Japanese reader. Of the 14 cultural features, the American reader responded to 7, while the Japanese reader touched on all 14. Noda also reported that the American reader's unfamiliarity with specific Japanese cultural symbols was a major obstacle in his response to the stories. Noda concluded that "the reader who possesses the cultural background relevant to that of the work [he is reading]. . .does bring a variety of cultural resources to bear which extend and enrich his response to the stories" (p. 4894-A).

The findings discussed thus far in this section of the literature review provide evidence that readers' cultural backgrounds and the cultures depicted within fictional texts are major factors in comprehension and response. As I have pointed out, however, these findings mainly come from studies that operationalize culture in terms of a generalized, widespread population. In contrast, Purves (1973), although using subjects from 10 countries to study the relationship of reader response patterns to the subjects' cultural backgrounds, operationalized culture more specifically by focusing on the reader's home and school experience. Looking at culture in a way akin to the anthropological concept of the term, Purves concluded from the study that "The ability to comprehend and interpret literary texts . . . is less the result of any particular curricular effort of the school than it is the result of a favorable home and school environment" (p. 34). Schools, Purves states, are "inculcators" of students' cultures; hence, in a study of cultural influences on readers, it is important to investigate how schools have affected the way readers view and approach literary works.

Anyon's ethnographic research (1981a, 1981b) supports Purves' emphasis on the importance of schools as a component of culture. Her work reveals that the type of "school knowledge" that has dominated the educational backgrounds of readers needs to be investigated as an influence on their responses to literature. In her studies of curricular, pedagogical, and pupil evaluation practices in elementary schools in different social class communities, Anyon found that school experiences differ qualitatively by social class. Not only do the variations in educational practices and emphasis contribute to the reproduction of unequal social structures in society, but they also have significant ramifications as to the development of various types of attitudes toward both literature and cultural diversity. Anyon's identification of a "hidden curriculum" in schools in different social class communities needs also to be a factor in the investigation of the influence of readers' cultural backgrounds on their responses to literature.

As Purves emphasized, an important aspect of a reader's culture, in addition to school experiences, is his or her home background. Heath's (1983) research on the influence of home and community backgrounds on individuals' school and job performance provides further insight into the anthropological perspective on culture as well as a model for ethnographic investigation of both home and school influences on literary response. The focus of Heath's research was on how people's preschool home and community environments affect their learning and uses of language structures in the classroom and on the job. In her study, she delineates culture as the social legacies, patterns of face-to-face interactions, and ways of adapting within and without a cultural group that influence the ways people communicate. In terms of research in reader response, Heath's study illustrates the importance of determining whether readers in their schooling have been exposed only to mainstream language and culture patterns or whether their education has involved "the similarities and differences among different cultural groups, and times, places, and styles" (p. 368). The latter type of educational experience would more likely result in greater sensitivity and in less prejudiced reactions to literature depicting specific cultural content. In addition, such an educational background should help to develop readers who have both a respect for their own, as well as for other, cultural and social legacies. The presence or absence of this respect would undoubtedly contribute to the kinds of responses and interpretations readers experience.

Culture of the Reading Event

The cultural context in which a reader experiences a text has been found to affect the subsequent responses to the work (Beach, 1973; Purves, 1973; Rosenblatt, 1938/1983, 1985a, 1985b). Purves (1985) further notes that, while the initial "solitary" response of a reader and his or her understanding of a literary work may remain the same, the context of the public expression of that response will determine what is said. The context can possibly "inhibit variability in the expressed response" (p. 67), if, for example, the context involves a specific school culture, an examination context, or a context defined by specific teacher or other-audience expectations. Purves also notes that certain contexts can "even preclude the expressed responses being the most accurate depiction of what is going on in a reader's head" (p. 69). Especially important in planning a response research design is Purves' observation that telling students that their written responses will not be graded relieves many of their concerns about what they are expected to say about a work.

Because of its emphasis on the context of group interaction, ethnographic inquiry is appropriate for studying the types of phenomena that Purves describes.

As Kantor, Kirby, and Goetz (1981) observe, ethnographic methodology "adopts a relational view, in which personal factors like response to literature are seen in light of social structures that enhance or constrain them" (p. 302). The need for this kind of research has long been recognized. Beach (1973), for example, expressed in the early 1970s the need for future research that "might study the effects of conformity of response in various contexts" (p. 102). His research comparing readers' private and public responses provided an example of investigation utilizing close observation of readers responding to texts in different physical and cultural environments. It was not until the 1980s, however, that any additional research studies incorporating ethnographic techniques to investigate cultural context of response were reported. In this small group of studies, I found two that serve to develop the conceptual framework for my research.

Golden's (1986) study of how groups of readers construct texts through social negotiation of meaning provides insight into another dimension of the culture of the reading event. Observing eighth-grade students and their teachers discussing short stories, Golden found that as readers formulate their interpretations of a story, they, through oral sharing of responses, begin to construct a "group text." As the discussion progresses, some aspects of the text are validated by the group; other aspects remain an individual reader's perspective. Golden explains that a "group text is shaped as individual perceptions are confirmed, modified, abandoned, and extended" (p. 91).

Strictly ethnographic research that focuses on the influences of cultural context on children's responses to literature was reported by Hickman (1980, 1981). Although her research deals with the elementary school culture, Hickman's work provides not only a model for ethnographic study of the classroom environment but also offers additional insight into what actually constitutes reader response. From her four-month experience as a participant observer in three elementary classrooms, Hickman discovered that children's responses to literature occur as a series of response events or happenings all of which are influenced by the contexts of the classroom and by the teachers who create the instructional settings. Hickman's observations revealed seven categories of response events that serve to expand the definition of reader response:

1. Listening behaviors: body stances, laughter and applause, exclamations, joining in refrains
2. Contact with books: browsing, showing intent attention, keeping books at hand
3. Acting on the impulse to share: reading together, sharing discoveries
4. Oral responses: retelling, storytelling, discussion statements, free comments
5. Actions and drama: echoing the action, demonstrating meaning, dramatic play, child-initiated drama, teacher-initiated drama
6. Making things: pictures and related art work, three-dimensional art and construction, miscellaneous products--games, displays, collections, cookery, etc.
7. Writing: restating and summarizing, writing about literature, using literary models deliberately, using unrecognized models and sources. (1981, p. 346)

Hickman's justification of her categories is based on the observation that "Although response itself is an essentially private phenomenon, outside observers have some access to it in terms of the respondents' public (classroom) verbal and nonverbal behaviors" (p. 345).

Related also to the idea of the reading event as a culture, Hickman emphasizes that her categories derived primarily from observations of children interacting in pairs, small groups, or in the total classroom setting. Although social interaction is an important consideration in studying response, it is, Hickman notes, difficult to determine its effect on individual readers' responses. Ethnographic observation of contextual settings is a means of overcoming this difficulty. Hickman's research revealed that "Various expressions of response were either permitted by or facilitated by or generated by the climate of the school and the classroom" (p. 352). Moreover, Hickman recognized the strong influence of the teacher as part of the classroom culture. As a manipulator of that culture, the teacher ultimately influences the types and the quality of responses students have to literary works.

As a result of her research, Hickman concluded that (1) reader response is a multifaceted phenomenon, (2) more response research needs to be done in classroom environments, and (3) that only through evidence gathered in naturalistic settings can researchers investigate such important questions about responses as:

> (a) What forms of response do children use when they deal with stories on their own, or when they interact with each other?
>
> (b) Do they seem to organize their thinking in the same ways?
>
> (c) Does response remain constant when the immediate social context changes? (p. 344)

Finally, Hickman's commentary on the value of ethnographic methodology offers support to the teacher-researcher who has chosen such an approach for studying the cultural influences on reader response.

> Research methods based on ethnography are time-consuming and demanding, but they carry important advantages, allowing for qualitative judgment, for making some distinctions between spontaneous and learned responses, and for description of the contexts in which certain kinds of responses are expressed. This broader perspective, so close to the teacher's natural angle of vision, can furnish practical insights for those who want to facilitate and encourage the expression of response to literature in their own classrooms. (1980, p. 529)

Summary

Research has shown that culture is a major factor in the complex process of reader response; however, examining the research reveals that additional investigation of cultural influence on response is needed that goes beyond looking at culture as a general phenomenon, such as the nationality of a reader or an author of a literary text. From a review of response theory and research, I have developed a conceptual framework that incorporates a more specific explanation of the term. Using anthropological interpretations of culture that focus on (1) the reader's cultural scene or his or her own discovery and organization of meaningful components of a social situation and (2) the cultural scene depicted in the text with which the reader interacts, I will investigate within a college setting cultural influences on reader response to literature. From this delineation of culture, I developed six research questions that guided the collection of data for my study. These questions and the research design are discussed in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Goetz and LeCompte (1984) define ethnography as both a product and a process. As a product it is a description or reconstruction of cultures through which to understand human behavior. As a process, ethnography is a research model consisting of a series of research strategies that are used to describe phenomena "as they occur in real-world settings" (p. 3). From the descriptions, the ethnographer investigates "the complex interrelationships of causes and consequences that affect human behavior toward, and belief about, the phenomena" (p. 3).

Using Goetz and LeCompte's description of the ethnographic process and following their stages of the ethnographic research model, I will discuss in this chapter the following components of the structure of my study: (1) the focus and purpose of the study, (2) the research questions the study addresses, (3) the participants and settings, (4) the role of the researcher, (5) data collection strategies, and (6) procedures to analyze data. In addition, this chapter includes a discussion of methods I used in my research to achieve ethnographic credibility.

A pilot study of the association of cultural background with readers' responses to Appalachian literature that I conducted in 1987 aided in the planning and decision-making involved in establishing the research design for my dissertation. As I discuss the above components, I will indicate how the earlier study gave direction to my research plan.

Focus, Purpose, and Research Questions

Focus of the Study

My dissertation focuses on the role culture plays in the ways readers respond to literature written about one regional culture or identity.

Purpose

The purpose of my study was to write an ethnographic description of how the reader's cultural background and the culture depicted in the text he or she is reading are associated with the responses of college-level readers to contemporary Appalachian short stories.

Research Questions

I developed the following research questions in order to investigate the two types of cultural influence on readers' written and oral responses.

1. What cultural backgrounds and what knowledge of Appalachia and of literature do the informants bring to their reading of the Appalachian short stories?
    a. From what cultural scenes do the informants come? A "cultural scene" refers to an individual's discovery and organization of meaningful components of a social situation (Spradley, 1980).
    b. What knowledge of and attitudes toward Appalachia does each informant possess?
    c. What place does Appalachia have in each informant's home and community background?
    d. What knowledge of and attitudes toward general reading activity and the reading of literature does each informant possess?
    e. What place do general reading and the reading of literature have in each informant's home and community background?

   f. What have been each informant's past school experiences with the reading and study of literature?

2. As first-semester college freshmen, how do the informants contrast themselves with students who come from geographical areas other than their own?

3. What cultural scenes are depicted in the stories?

4. What cultural scenes do the informants identify in the stories?

5. How do the informants as individuals respond to the cultural scenes that emerge from the stories?

6. How do the informants' backgrounds affect their responses to the stories?

   a. How do the informants as individuals respond to familiar and unfamiliar cultural features of the stories? "Features" are defined as those facets of a story that readers recognize as meaningful.

   b. To what prior knowledge of Appalachia and of literature do the informants refer in their responses?

   c. What stock or preconceived ideas about literature and about Appalachia are any of the informants using to form responses to the stories? "Stock ideas" refer to predetermined or stereotypical views or attitudes that interfere with a reader "experiencing fully all that a literary work offers" (Rosenblatt, 1938/1983, p. 107).

Participants and Settings

The Participants

My study was conducted during the fall of 1988 at Belvedere College,[1] a small, four-year, liberal arts school located in the heart of Appalachia. At the beginning of the fall semester, the total enrollment of 366 students included 136 first-semester freshmen. Of the total enrollment, 301 students were Virginia residents, 45 were from West Virginia, and 20 students came from six additional states and nine foreign countries. Approximately half (49.2%) of the students were living on campus, and 50.8% commuted from their homes or off-campus housing.

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[1] Belvedere College is a pseudonym for the school where this study was conducted. Pseudonyms are also used for the participants in order to protect their privacy and to assure the confidentiality of their responses in all aspects of the study.

In the pilot study that I also conducted at Belvedere, I used three informants, each representing a specific cultural group: (1) an informant from a working class background who had always lived in rural Southern Appalachia, who graduated from a small rural school, and who was presently attending college in the same area; (2) an informant from an urban, middle-class background, who attended urban schools, and who had only recently moved to the Southern Appalachian region; and (3) an informant, myself, originally from the Appalachian region but who had also lived in other areas and had a more varied and extensive background than the other two participants in the study. Informants one and two were students in the course I was teaching on Appalachian literature.

For my dissertation, I selected informants from the 1988-89 freshman class at Belvedere. In contrast to the informants in the pilot study who were all English majors and enrolled in a literature class designated "Appalachian," in-coming freshmen provided, for informant selection purposes, a greater diversity of backgrounds; and, because the course was titled "freshman English," they were not affected from the outset by possible preconceptions of how a teacher of Appalachian literature at Belvedere might expect them to respond to the stories they would read.

During the fall semester I taught three of the six scheduled sections of freshman English. Only one of the six sections had any restrictive criteria for admittance. This section, which was one of my teaching assignments, was reserved for students who showed deficiencies in their writing skills on the college's English placement test and/or performance on the ACT or SAT examinations. Students in my three sections became the large group (N = 78) from which I identified, first of all, a range of the characteristics and experiences of freshmen at Belvedere. I began this procedure by using two instruments. The first was a student survey I prepared to obtain information on each student's family, home, and school background. Questions on the survey include asking students to list all places where they have lived, to describe their communities, and to relate their feelings about the locality in which they grew up (see Appendix A for the survey form).

Second, to obtain information about students' approaches to reading literature and about their past school experiences with literature, I used the Attitude Toward Fiction Questionnaire (Clayton, 1979). This 65-item survey contains questions pertaining to the types of literature the students prefer, their preferences of teaching methods, and their criteria for selecting literature to read.

In addition to the two instruments, I also had access to the Admissions Office records. These included student applications for admission to Belvedere, English placement tests (including a writing sample), SAT and ACT scores, and transcripts that provided further data to determine the range of student characteristics.

After obtaining a profile of the freshmen, I began the process of identifying sub-groups. The profile of the large group showed that 75% of the students were 18-19 years old and 92% were white; therefore, as an initial step in selecting a representative sample, I eliminated individuals outside of these categories as possible informants.

Based on the research questions I had developed for the study, I saw as the most important criteria for sub-group selection (1) home, community, and school background, (2) parents' educational backgrounds and socio-economic status, (3) previous experience with Appalachia, and (4) previous experience with literature.

The student profile revealed three main categories of residence in Appalachia: those students who had always lived in the Southern Appalachia, those who had moved to the region within the last five years, and those who had never lived in Appalachia until coming to Belvedere. In terms of experience with literature, both at home and at school, student surveys, questionnaires, and placement office information allowed me to determine whether each student's literary background was weak, moderate, or strong. An entry from my journal early in September reads:

> I've been staying on schedule and am now making the final decision about the sample of informants. Surveys, writing samples, and the first go-round of written and oral responses to the first story have been completed. I have tried to get a range of characteristics; and on the basis of this range and my gut feelings about how I will be able to work with individual students, I am now ready to choose the sample.

After much observation and reflection and keeping in mind that the nature of ethnographic investigation demands that informants be selected with whom the researcher can establish a rapport necessary for carrying out the ethnographic research strategies, I selected six students--three male and three female--as informants. Both Daniel and Laura are life-long residents of Southern Appalachia, each having lived at one location for 18 years. Marshall, on the other hand, moved to Southern Appalachia one year ago after living for 18 years near a large metropolitan area in the state of Maryland, and Ruth Ann moved to Southern Appalachia in 1986 after living in Delaware for 16 years. Richard and Toni, both 18, had never lived in Appalachia before coming to Belvedere. For additional information on the informants see Table 1.

The Settings

During the weeks of the 1988 fall semester, I collected data for my study in the two classrooms at Belvedere where all sections of freshman English are taught. I conducted the interviews of individual informants in my office, which is located between the rooms.

Rather than collecting classroom response data in only the large-group setting, I created for my dissertation three contexts or social situations in order to create multiple sources of oral response data. The three social situations were:

1. The large-group classroom setting where the teacher/researcher led a discussion on a story.
2. The small-group (four or five students) settings where students shared and discussed responses to a story during class time with no teacher intervention. I had students form their own groups and create discussion environments, such as moving desks to a corner of the classroom, going next door to a vacant art studio, or sitting outside on the lawn, so that the informants would be reading and discussing in "natural" social situations rather than ones I had imposed upon them.
3. The two-member group settings where students shared and discussed responses to a story during class time with no teacher intervention. As with the small groups, after the students selected their partners, I encouraged each pair to choose a location where they wanted to discuss the story.

Informants were placed in each of these situations two times during the semester.

Table 1: Profile of the Informants

Informant	Sex	Race	Age	Length of Residence in Appalachia	Previous Experience with Literature		Parents' Education		Parents' Occupations	
					Home	School	Mother	Father	Mother	Father
Daniel	M	W	18	18 Years	Weak	Moderate	High School	Eighth Gr.	Housewife	Mechanic
Laura	F	W	18	18 Years	Moderate	Strong	High School	High School	Bookkeeper	Deceased
Marshall	M	W	18	1 Year	Strong	Moderate	High School	Tech. Coll.	Office Wkr.	Owner of Auto Business
Ruth Ann	F	W	18	2 Years	Weak	Moderate	Bus. School	High School	Salesperson	Disabled Truck Driver
Richard	M	W	18	0	Moderate	Strong	Jr. College	Tech. Coll.	Housewife	Engineer
Toni	F	W	18	0	Weak	Moderate	Master's	Master's	Accountant	Army Major

The Role of the Researcher

My role in this study was, first of all, one of a participant observer. I participated in the research activities as well as observing what was happening. The role is what Spradley (1980) calls "The Insider/Outsider Experience" (p. 56). The ethnographic researcher, he explains, must constantly move in and out of the insider and outsider roles as well as often carrying out both simultaneously. As I conducted the study, I sometimes was interacting with a total class; at other times I was only organizing groups and giving instructions. At still other times, I was interviewing one student in my office. Because I used my own classes in this research, it was essential for me to keep in mind Spradley's warning that "the more you know about a situation as an ordinary participant, the more difficult it is to study it as an ethnographer" (p. 61). It was, therefore, necessary to approach my role with "wide-angle lens" (Spradley, p. 56); that is, I strived to be perceptive and attentive to what was happening around me, to see my situation as completely as possible.

In the study I used the following criteria to strengthen my role as a participant observer. First of all, students were encouraged to express freely their responses. I tried to eliminate any fears on the part of students that they would say or write "something wrong" when responding to the stories they read. They knew that their responses would not be graded; however, the course syllabus indicated that students would be expected to write thorough and detailed responses and ethnographic records (see Data Collection Section) and that their efforts during the semester would be considered as part of their evaluation.

Second, I emphasized from the beginning of the semester that any student's responses deserved as much attention as any other student's or as my own. Students often believe that the teacher has possession of the "real" meanings of literary works and will reveal them when he or she gets ready. Through discussions early in the semester, I addressed and attempted to refute this attitude.

Third, an emphasis in my freshman English courses was writing about cultures. The students read the Appalachian stories throughout the semester, along with other reading assignments in the course text, Jo Ray McCuen and Anthony C. Winkler's Readings for Writers. To avoid influencing students' responses to the stories, I purposely did not use the terms "Appalachian" and "regional" when assigning the selections. If questioned as to why the class was reading these particular stories, I replied that they were being used to supplement the class text and to provide additional examples of fiction that contain cultural themes.

Fourth, my role in leading large-group discussions of "The Return" and "The Proffitts in Chicago" was to encourage free elaboration in the student's initial written responses and, if applicable, in how their responses to a story had changed. As a participant observer in these discussions, I guarded against appearing to be giving or agreeing with the correct response to or interpretation of a story. In addition to preparing field notes, I audio-recorded these participant observations for future analysis.

The Selection of the Stories

In my pilot study, the informants were enrolled in a course in Appalachian poetry and fiction. Most of the fictional works we read were novels. The participant observations were conducted when our class was reading poems by various Appalachian writers and the novel The Dollmaker by Harriette Arnow. Based on this experience and on the discussions of text selection practices I read in the review of reader response research, I decided that using only short stories would be more appropriate for my dissertation research. In addition to their being able to read a short story during one class period, college freshmen, I have found, are generally more receptive to reading short stories than poems or plays; they tend to discuss stories more readily; and they see the short story as similar to descriptive and narrative themes, the main types of writing done in the first semester freshmen composition course. Because I would be examining responses both during and after the students' reading of texts, I selected short stories of comparable lengths so that (1) each selection could be read and responded to within one 50-minute class session and (2) a consistent method of dividing texts into sections could be applied to each story before it was assigned.

As a basis for selecting the stories, I used, first of all, Welch's (1976) definition of Appalachian literature: "that literature which reflects certain qualities of Appalachian culture and which concerns itself with the land as it impinges on human life" (p. 168). In addition, I decided to use selections from recent Appalachian fiction so that it was probable that all students would be reading the stories for the first time. In the process of identifying stories appropriate for my study, I first looked for selections that possess literary quality and appropriateness for college-level reading. Second, I looked for stories that contain ambiguity, that is, open to multiple responses and interpretations, and the length of which allows for reading and responding within a 50-minute time period. Third, in an effort to avoid on the part of the students repetition of response and a resulting loss of reader interest, I wanted to select stories for my study that, while all "Appalachian," contain a diversity of subject matter, characters, styles, and voices or points of view.

After deciding on a group of eight stories, I "tried them out" during the 1988 spring semester with three groups of second-semester freshmen. Students wrote responses to the stories, discussed them in class, and chose to write some of their assigned papers on individual stories. At the end of the semester, I reviewed the students' oral and written responses to the stories and decided on the following selections for my study:

(a) "The Return" by Brett Litton

(b) "Heat Lightning" by Lee Smith

(c) "Night Ride" by Gurney Norman

(d) "The Proffitts in Chicago" by Vera and Bill Cleaver

(e) "First Day of Winter" by Breece D'J Pancake

(f) "Offerings" by Bobbie Ann Mason

Data Collection and Analysis

In this section I will describe each data collection method used in the study and explain the methods I used to analyze the collected data. As an overview, Table 2 lists all data collection and analysis procedures discussed in the following paragraphs.

Data Collection

1. Ethnographic Interviews

To collect data on the informants' backgrounds and on their perceptions and experiences during the semester, I conducted a series of ethnographic interviews with each of the six students. Each interview lasted approximately two hours. The first focused primarily on the informants' backgrounds and the last, held after at least five of the six stories were read, dealt with the informants' feelings about the stories, both individually and as a group, and about their experiences in the different discussion situations. In planning the interviews, I used Spradley's (1979) guidelines for structuring ethnographic interviews and generating questions related to the focus and purpose of my study. Following Spradley's approach, I planned, prior to each interview session, three categories of questions for the informant: (1) descriptive ("Tell me about. . ."), (2) structural ("What are. . ."), and (3) contrast (What is the difference between. . ."). Each interview was audio-taped and transcribed for future analysis. Appendix B contains an excerpt from one of the informant interviews.

Table 2: List of All Data Collection and Analysis Procedures Used in the Study

Data Collection Procedures

1. Ethnographic interviews
2. Written responses to the stories
3. Oral responses to the stories (including participant observations)
4. Artifact or site documents
5. Ethnographic records

Data Analysis Procedures

1. Spradley's DRS Methods
    a. Domain analysis
    b. Taxonomic analysis
    c. Componential analysis
    d. Thematic analysis
2. Erickson's Analytic Narrative
    a. Determination of assertions
    b. Construction of supporting vignettes

2. Written and Oral Responses

To record the initial responses of the informants to each story, I used Clayton's (1980) system of responding to word-count divisions of a text. The total number of words in each story was divided by four to yield four equal-in-length sections. After a class silently read each section of a story, they answered in writing the following questions: (1) What has happened in the story?, (2) What will happen next?, and (3) What will be the final outcome of the story? Only the first question applied to the fourth section of the text.

After all four sections of the story were read and the students had finished responding, I took up the stories and responses. During the following class period, students were placed in one of the social situations. Two times during the semester, they were in a large-group discussion, two times they were divided into four-or-five member groups, and two times they discussed a story in two-member groups. In each social situation, before beginning a discussion, the students were given copies of the story they read during the last class and asked to write a response to the question: "What do you make of this story?" When the responses were completed and collected, group discussion began. Each student was required to write a detailed account (ethnographic record) of what went on in his or her group discussion. This account was due the next class period.

One week later, the students read the same story once again and responded in writing to the following assignment: "Describe your experience of re-reading this story."

The procedure described above was used throughout the semester for collecting written responses to each of the stories. The series of written responses provided the data I later used to determine how cultural influences affected reader responses from the initial encounter with a text through subsequent re-readings.

To record the oral responses to the stories that occurred in each of the social situations, I used (1) fieldnotes written during and immediately after large-group classroom discussions (participant observations), (2) audiotapes of large-group discussions and the ethnographic interviews, and (3) student-generated ethnographic records of all the large-group, small-group, and pair discussions.

3. Artifacts

The following artifacts or site documents provided additional sources of data for my research questions: the Survey of Student Background, the college admission office files, the Attitude Toward Fiction Questionnaire, the student English placement essays and the personal essays written by the students during the semester.

4. Ethnographic Records

All of my informants, along with all of the other students in my composition classes, wrote accounts of their experiences with the stories in the various social situations that I created. They wrote these accounts in a manner similar to Spradley's (1980) discussion of the "ethnographic record" (p. 63) of observations in the field. Based on Spradley's explanation, an ethnographic record as used in my study is a written narrative that documents as completely as possible a student's total experience with reading, responding to, and discussing a story in a specific social situation. In writing the narratives, the students were encouraged to give special attention to the various language usages that they witnessed. (See

Appendix C for the ethnographic record assignment sheet and an example of a record written by one informant.)

Writing an ethnographic record is an appropriate assignment for composition classes because of the emphasis on using concrete detail and actual or "native" language to produce accurate descriptions of observed behavior. I taught my students to write these descriptions at the beginning of the semester as a part of the composition course, and they saw this writing as a legitimate part of freshmen English. However, their papers created another method for collecting data on what happened in the group sessions. These ethnographic records were especially valuable for obtaining data on the small-group and two-member group sessions, all of which I could not always directly observe.

Furthermore, having all students write the records provided accounts of how other members of the groups perceived the informants. As a means for comparing and cross-checking data, the records became another way of achieving triangulation in my study.

Data Analysis

The data analysis procedures I used in this study allowed me to identify patterns and themes associated with the relationships among the culture of the reader, the culture of the text and reader response. Prior to beginning the analysis, I used the six research questions as a basis for organizing and grouping all the data collected (see Data Sources for Each Research Question section). For example, in preparing to analyze data for research question #1, I placed each informant's interview, artifact, survey, and personal essay data in a file folder and applied the analysis procedures discussed below to each category of data in the file. After completing the analysis for all six informants, I repeated this procedure for questions #2 and #4 through #6, always beginning with the same informant, Daniel, and ending with the data pertaining to Toni. For research question #3, each of the six stories was analyzed separately, using the procedure discussed later in this chapter.

1. Spradley's DRS Methods

In order to discover cultural patterns in the data I collected, I first used a series of analysis procedures included in Spradley's (1980) Developmental Research Sequence Method. To illustrate Spradley's analysis procedure, I will use the first ethnographic interview that I conducted with Daniel. After completing a typed transcription of the two-hour interview, I first began a search for cultural domains, that is those categories of cultural meaning that include other smaller categories. Each domain has three elements: a cover term, included terms, and a semantic relationship. Spradley suggests use of the following semantic relationships for an analysis of cultural domains:

Relationship	Form
1. Strict inclusion	X (included term) is a kind of Y (cover term)
2. Spatial	X is a place in (or a part of) Y
3. Cause-effect	X is a result of Y
4. Rationale	X is a reason for doing Y
5. Location-for-action	X is a place for doing Y
6. Function	X is used for Y
7. Means-end	X is a way to do Y
8. Sequence	X is a step (stage) in Y
9. Attribution	X is an attribution (characteristic) of Y

(Spradley, 1980, p. 93)

Using a worksheet to record each domain (see Appendix D for an example), I took each semantic relationship and carefully went through each page of the interview transcription. Upon completing the domain analysis, I had identified seven of the relationships with a total of 48 domains. One of the domains was "Characteristics of Daniel's Dad" which illustrates the semantic relationship "X (is a characteristic of) Y." The cover term here is "Dad," and I found 16 included terms, such as "not into much reading at all," "can't stand not doing anything," and "always wanted me and my brother to have more than he did." After completing all of the semantic relationship categories, I prepared a "List of All Identified Domains in Daniel's First Interview." This procedure was used for all additional data sources.

The next analysis procedure that I used in Spradley's system was the taxonomic analysis where relationships among all the included terms in a single domain are identified. As an analysis method, establishing categories or subsets of related terms not only helped in the management of data but, more importantly, led to the discovery of cultural patterns within the data sources.

Using Spradley's third method of analysis, I focused on the contrasts of attributes among members of a domain. Spradley calls this procedure "componential analysis" because the search here is for components or units of meaning that informants give their cultural categories. Componential analysis allowed me to use the six informants as dimensions of contrast and thus compare aspects of the cultural scenes I discovered.

After identifying domains and their organizations and relationships, I used selected strategies from Spradley's final analysis procedure--the discovery of cultural themes or those "principle[s] recurrent in a number of domains, tacit or explicit, and serving as a relationship among subsystems of cultural meanings" (Spradley, 1980, p. 141). Through completed componential analyses and immersion in the total data, I identified themes that recurred in more than one domain. I also used Spradley's strategy of theme discovery that focuses on "organizing domains." After completing a domain analysis of a data source, I chose an organizing domain based on a sequence relationship such as X (is a stage in) Y. Because, as Spradley (1980) states, an organizing domain "provides a lot of hooks on which to hang the rest of the cultural scene" (p. 158), I was able to write holistic overviews of cultural scenes that emerged from my data sources as well as the texts of the six stories. Demanding careful observation of relationships and connections among a series of domains, writing overviews provided an additional means of theme identification.

2. The Analytic Narrative Method

I also used Erickson's (1986) analytic narrative methodology to analyze data. Using Erickson's methods, the researcher carefully searches fieldnotes, interview transcriptions, and artifact data to come up with a list of assertions that apply to the data. Generated through induction, these assertions or statements are fairly low inference and can be tested empirically. The strongest assertions are those that have the greatest number of connections to the total data set.

Each assertion needs to be accompanied by what Erickson calls "evidentary warrant" (p. 149) or supporting information supplied by reporting particular and general descriptions in the form of narrative vignettes. Erickson defines these descriptive accounts as "vivid portrayal[s] of the conduct of an event of everyday life in which the sights and sounds of what was being said and done are described in the natural sequence of their occurrence in real time" (pp. 149-150). Because it creates "a sense of being there in the scene" (p. 150), the vignette provides rich documentation for the researcher's assertions about data. In my research, it is these assertions, combined with the themes identified through Spradley's DRS methodology, that I used to form the conclusions of my study.

Construction of Vignettes and the Ethnographic Text

The vignettes I wrote to document the assertions identified through Erickson's analysis procedure became an integral part of the ethnographic report in Chapter 4. Following Erickson's approach to constructing vignettes, I reviewed carefully the assertions and themes generated through analysis of data. To document these assertions and themes, I searched the data sources for "concrete particulars" (Erickson, p. 67) that could be developed into descriptive narratives. These narratives were not only meant to support the series of assertions and themes that became the basis of the ethnographic text but also were to "present to the reader [of the text] a clear picture of the interpretative point the author [intended] by telling the vignette" (p. 67). In composing the vignettes, I tried to create rich, detailed, and polished accounts, derived from the data, that would convey meanings the events presented in the accounts had for the informants in my study.

In addition to Erickson's model of the narrative vignette, Van Maanen's (1988) approaches to writing ethnographies also provided insight into how I could use the narrative form as a method of text construction. Categorizing these approaches into types of fieldwork accounts or what he calls "tales of the field," Van Maanen explains and illustrates narrative conventions that an ethnographer can use to write "accurate, authentic, and authoritative" texts (p. 7). Using his discussions and models of fieldwork accounts, I was able to establish two specific strategies for writing about the findings from each of my study's research questions.

Realist Account

One of Van Maanen's forms of ethnographic writing is the realist account. With its emphasis on cultural representation, the realist mode of writing focuses "on the saying, doings, and supposed thinkings of the people studied" (p. 47). The researcher's role is to provide, through a third-person documentary style, concrete detail, quotations, facts, and authentic language that support his or her interpretation of a culture. In writing the realist account, the researcher seeks to produce the subjects' points of view. Two additional characteristics of this type of writing are the traditional use of active voice and present tense, each helping to achieve "ethnographic realism" (p. 40). In my study the realist approach to writing a text was appropriate for incorporating assertions and themes into accurate depictions of the cultural scenes pertaining to the informants' cultural backgrounds, the cultures depicted in the stories, and into discussions of the informants' responses.

Impressionist Account

Closely akin to Erickson's concept of the narrative vignette is what Van Maanen calls the impressionist account. Comparing this type of ethnographic writing to the work of an Impressionist painter who tries "to capture a worldly scene in a special instant or moment of time" (p. 101), Van Maanen explains the impressionist approach as constructing, through dramatic techniques, a "story world" (p. 103) into which the ethnographer brings an audience. As with Erickson's emphasis on creating in vignettes an illusion of "being there," Van Maanen's impressionist story or tale has the purpose of allowing an audience momentarily "to see, hear, and feel" (p. 103) what the fieldworker has discovered. Because it immediately draws an audience into the representation of a culture, this mode of writing was primarily used in my study to introduce informants and cultural scenes.

Data Sources for Each Research Question

This section of the chapter contains brief explanations of the sources I used to collect data for each of the study's research questions.

1. What social backgrounds and what knowledge of Appalachia and of literature do the informants bring to their reading of the Appalachian short stores?

The most important data source for this question was the series of ethnographic interviews. Other data sources were artifacts and site documents, including the surveys and the essays written by informants during the semester.

2. As first semester freshmen, how do the informants contrast themselves with students who come from geographical areas other than their own?

The ethnographic interviews provided data on the differences informants saw not only about themselves but other students as well. Nonparticipant and participant observation, the Student Background Survey, ethnographic records, and student essays were additional data sources.

3. What cultural scenes are depicted in the stories?

To identify and describe the cultures depicted in each story, I used Spradley's (1980) method of domain analysis. After completing a domain analysis of each story, I chose an organizing domain (see Data Analysis section) through which to structure an overview of the cultural scene found in each selection the informants read. In writing the overview, I summarized the central parts of the culture of each story by including major domains and emphasizing relationships among parts of that culture. For example, the organizing domain for the first story the informants read, "The Return," was "Stages in Wave's visit to his grandparents." I used this domain to structure a summary of the cultural scene that involved 45 domains I identified in the story. The aim of the summary overview was to present a holistic view of the cultural scene of a story based on a complete domain analysis.

4. What cultural scenes do the informants identify in the stories?

I used oral and written responses, participant observations, interviews, and students' ethnographic records to discover the cultural scenes the informants focused upon in their reading.

5. How do the informants as individuals respond to the cultural scenes that emerge from the stories?

Oral and written responses, participant observations, interviews, and the ethnographic records provided data for this question.

6. How do the informants' backgrounds affect their responses to the stories?

I used a number of data sources for this question: informants' oral and written responses, the ethnographic records, participant observations, interviews, and site documents.

Strategies to Achieve Ethnographic Credibility

Triangulation

Goetz and LeCompte (1984) discuss the necessity of ethnographers employing in their research a combination of several data collection and analysis methods so that they can draw accurate conclusions. The use of multiple methods of data collection and analysis, or methodological triangulation, makes it possible for the investigator to (1) cross-check the accuracy of collected data, (2) avoid premature acceptance of the validity of initial impressions, and (3) overcome bias that can result when only one researcher is conducting a study.

To achieve triangulation in my research, I used two procedures, Spradley's and Erickson's, to analyze the data gathered through the following methods:

1. ethnographic interviews
2. participant observations
3. nonparticipant observations
4. audiotapes of interviews and large-group class discussions
5. written responses to the stories
6. student-generated ethnographic records or accounts of large-group, small-group, and pair discussions
7. site documents

Reliability

To be credible, an ethnographic study must contain a detailed description of the design and methodology so that other researchers could replicate the research strategies. Ethnographers need "to present their methods so clearly that other researchers can use the original report as an operating manual by which to replicate the study" (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984, p. 216). Reliability, according to Goetz and LeCompte, applies to both external and internal ethnographic design.

a. External Reliability

External reliability has to do with "the issue of whether independent researchers would discover the same phenomena or generate the same constructs in the same or similar settings" (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984, p. 210). Based on Goetz and LeCompte's guidelines for achieving external reliability, I tried to (1) establish and describe clearly my role as the researcher, (2) explain the selection of informants, (3) establish and explain the social situations involved in the study, (4) define concepts, and (5) explain methods of data collection and analysis.

b. Internal Reliability

Internal reliability has to do with whether "other researchers, given a set of previously generated constructs, would match them with data in the same way as did the original researcher" (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984, p. 210). To reduce threats to internal reliability in my study, I used low-inference descriptors, mechanically recorded data, and student-generated ethnographic records.

Validity

Validity in ethnographic research refers to the accuracy of findings. Goetz and LeCompte (1984) explain that achieving validity involves "(1) determining the extent to which conclusions effectively represent empirical reality and (2) assessing whether constructs devised by researchers represent or measure categories of human experience that occur" (p. 210). As with reliability, validity applies to external and internal research design.

a. External Validity

External validity is concerned with the extent to which a study's representations of reality can be compared across groups. Goetz and LeCompte indicate that external validity is threatened by any effects that reduce the comparability and translatability of the components of a study. To achieve comparability, I tried to present clear explanations of informants, settings, and constructs used in the study. To make the study translatable, I used established definitions and research techniques familiar to other researchers in both reader response and ethnographic investigation.

b. Internal Validity

Internal validity has to do with the question, "Do scientific researchers actually observe or measure what they think they are observing or measuring?" (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984, p. 221). Collecting data over a fourteen-week period and conducting informant interviews and participant observations aided me in eliminating threats to internal validity in my study. In addition to triangulating data sources, use of student-generated ethnographic records allowed me to examine data from different points of view. Furthermore, I sought to lessen the threat of observer effects by having informants review narrative vignettes and fieldnotes from interviews and participant observations to determine if "meanings between the participants and the observer actually are shared" (Goetz & LeCompte, p. 222).

Goetz and LeCompte note another important factor related to establishing validity in ethnographic research: "the process of researcher self-monitoring" (p. 221) where all phases of the research are continually questioned and re-evaluated. Erickson (1986) calls the ethnographic reporting of this questioning and discovery process "a natural history of inquiry" (p. 152). As a study progresses, it is necessary, Erickson explains, for the researcher to report those discoveries of unexpected patterns of meaning that result during the course of fieldwork. In beginning a study, an ethnographer establishes research questions that will guide the research. It is, therefore, only natural that he or she will make assumptions and even have "ideological commitments" (p. 152) as to the outcome of the research. Consequently, it is important, Erickson states, to view ethnographic inquiry as a "search for falsification" of initial perspectives: the process of this search needs to be documented for the reader of the study in order to show

> (a) that the author was open to perceiving, recording, and reflecting on evidence that would disconfirm the author's preconceived notions and commitments (as evidenced by the fact that the author's thinking and data collection did change during the course of the study); and (b) specific ways in which the changes in interpretative perspective took place. (p. 152)

An illustration of my own familiarity with the importance of approaching an ethnographic study as a "search for falsification" comes from the previous research I conducted in my pilot study. I theorized, prior to beginning my research, that a reader confronting a body of literature depicting his or her own home territory would be at an advantage over other readers not familiar with the cultural milieu of that region. It would have been possible, during the course of the research, for me to have focused only on data that confirmed my original theory. However, because I sought to obtain a thorough record of the content of each participant observation, to analyze complete transcriptions of interviews, and to reflect throughout my research on any patterns I saw emerging, my study actually did result in a "falsification" of this particular theory. The main assertion in the final report of my research was that, although having first-hand knowledge of the cultural content of a literary work can possibly lead to understanding and "easy" comprehension, it can also contribute to a reader experiencing what Rosenblatt (1938/1983) explains as a partial view of a total text and restricted interpretation of the selection. Through the data I presented in my study, the reader can find the evidence on which this assertion is based and recognize how ethnographic inquiry brought me to such an interpretation.

According to Erickson, generating assertions from the total corpus of existing confirming and disconfirming evidence contributes to the validity of the researcher's interpretation and analysis of the data. I, therefore, continued to place emphasis on this inquiry strategy and method of establishing validity as I collected data for my dissertation.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This chapter contains the results of the data analysis procedures used to describe the cultural influences on readers' responses to Appalachian short stories. The chapter is organized on the basis of the six research questions that guided the study. For each division of the chapter, I will explain the procedure for reporting the findings. Narrative vignettes, impressionist and realist forms of text construction, and selected graphic displays of data are included throughout the chapter to support and illustrate theme and assertion statements.

The Influence of the Informants' Cultural Scenes and Their Knowledge of and Attitudes Toward Appalachia, General Reading Activity, and the Reading and Study Literature

In this section findings on the influences of the informants' cultural backgrounds and of their knowledge of Appalachia, general reading, and literature are presented. Table 3 contains listings of identified assertions and themes related to each informant's cultural background and serves as an advance organizer for the section. The discussion of each informant will begin with a narrative vignette that illustrates key assertions about the cultural scene from which he or she comes and serves to introduce the informant to the audience of this study. The vignette is followed by additional assertions and themes related to the six subdivisions of research question #1 and presented in the realist mode of ethnographic writing.

Table 3: Overview of Identified Assertions and Themes Related to Each Informant's Cultural Background

Daniel:

The Cultural Scene

1. Daniel has always enjoyed his life in southwest Virginia.
2. Daniel likes the peacefulness of his home and the fact that all of his family and friends live close by.
3. Daniel hopes he will never have to live anywhere else.
4. Daniel is partial to small communities, schools, and churches.
5. Daniel wants to know everyone in his environment.
6. Daniel loves farm life.
7. Daniel enjoys taking part in his grandparents' and parents' "use of the land."
8. Daniel is proud that his life is similar to the lives of his ancestors.
9. Daniel enjoys hunting and working outside in the fields and garden.

Knowledge of and Attitudes Toward Appalachia

10. Daniel is not sure where Appalachia is located but believes it is synonomous with mountains.
11. Daniel equates "the country environment where (his) family has always lived" with Appalachia.
12. Daniel does not mind being called an Appalachian.
13. Daniel has a positive attitude about living in Appalachia.
14. Daniel does not want his life in Appalachia to change.

Knowledge of and Attitudes Toward Reading and Literature

15. Daniel's favorite part of English class is reading literature.
16. Daniel especially enjoys adventure stories.
17. Daniel prefers stories, more than novels, that "take place outdoors and whose main characters are outdoorsmen."
18. Daniel likes to read when he is bored and when he cannot go outside.
19. Daniel does not see reading as a part of his home and community life.
20. Daniel lists the local newspaper, a few magazines, the Bible, a dictionary, and an atlas as the reading materials in his home.
21. Daniel does not see his parents as "much into reading at all."
22. Daniel is glad he had a good junior and senior high English teacher who prepared him for the study of literature in college.
23. Daniel sees the reading of literature as an enjoyable experience if the selections are ones that he can relate to and understand.

Laura:

The Cultural Scene

1. Laura and her mother have a close relationship.
2. Laura's decisions are influenced by her mother's feelings and expectations for her daughter.
3. Laura views herself as a responsible person.
4. Laura is thankful that her parents brought her up in a stern, yet sensitive way.
5. Laura enjoys the companionship of her entire family.
6. Laura expects other people to respect and understand her desire to have a close relationship with her family.
7. Laura is glad that she can live at home while attending college.

Knowledge of and Attitudes Toward Appalachia

8. At the beginning of the semester, Laura was not sure what the term Appalachian referred to.
9. Laura, after talking with her mother, thinks the term Appalachian refers to poor and common people.
10. Laura does not believe that her immediate family members in southwest Virginia are Appalachians.
11. Laura likes living in Belvedere because it is peaceful and safe.
12. Laura does not see Belvedere as a part of Appalachia.
13. Laura regrets that the first things she thinks of about growing up in the Belvedere area is people making fun of the way she talks and many of her friends fussing about how they hate this area.
14. Laura believes that if she ever moves to another area, she will change the way she talks; however, she really does not want to change.

Knowledge of and Attitudes Toward Reading and Literature

15. Laura is bothered that she does not share her mother's love of reading.
16. Laura enjoys reading works that hold her interest and that contain characters similar to her.
17. Laura expects the literature she reads to provide a learning experience for her.
18. Laura believes that most people her age do not dislike reading but, like her, just do not have the time to read.
19. Laura remembers that her home has always been full of books and magazines that her mother enjoys reading.
20. Laura is glad that in high school she learned to place value on her own responses to what she reads.

Table 3 (Continued)

Marshall:

The Cultural Scene

1. Marshall, upon moving to southwest Virginia from Maryland, immediately sensed that people saw him as "a yankee from up North."
2. Marshall sees being viewed as a newcomer the most difficult aspect of his move to southwest Virginia.
3. Marshall has always taken pride in his ability to make friends.
4. Marshall believes that having family in southwest Virginia made it easier for him to get acquainted here.
5. Marshall finds life in southwest Virginia to be a strong contrast to what he was used to in Maryland.
6. Marshall finds that people in southwest Virginia generally have closer relationships with each other, but he finds it hard to explain why.
7. Marshall finds that he now does not put as much emphasis on buying and spending as he did in Maryland.
8. Marshall has always loved to hear his grandparents talk about their family history.
9. Marshall believes that the strength and closeness of his family are an important part of their heritage.

Knowledge of and Attitudes Toward Appalachia

10. Marshall defines Appalachian as referring to "any mountainous or rural area such as this (southwest Virginia) area."
11. Marshall finds people in the southwest Virginia region more caring, friendly, and outgoing than in Maryland.
12. Marshall is bothered by the poverty he witnesses in southwest Virginia.
13. Marshall would not want to stay in southwest Virginia because it does not offer "any security for the future."
14. Marshall likes the idea of living in the same area where his parents grew up.
15. Marshall believes that if he did not have some relatives in southwest Virginia and had not previously been familiar with the area, then he "probably would not have wanted any part of it."
16. Marshall has developed "deeper definitions" of hillbilly and redneck since moving to southwest Virginia.
17. Marshall sees now how often in the past he has been too quick to categorize people.

Knowledge of and Attitudes Toward Reading and Literature

18. Marshall concludes that in the past he mainly read literature because he had to.
19. Marshall now likes to read literature that is fast-paced and has believable characters.
20. Marshall remembers that the main reading materials in his home were history books, business and sports magazines, and the newspaper.
21. Marshall usually found reading assignments in high school to be a "burden" but believes that his teachers influenced the amount of effort he put into the assignments.
22. Marshall's main criticism of his study of literature in school was not feeling free to express his opinions and interpretations.
23. Marshall believes that his English teachers could have done more to involve students in ther classes, but he admits that he could have also put more effort into his school work.

Ruth Ann:

The Cultural Scene

1. Ruth Ann lived in a resort-like community in Delaware before moving to southwest Virginia.
2. Ruth Ann spent much time with elderly people in her community.
3. Ruth Ann and her family were bothered by the growing congestion in their community.
4. Ruth Ann's greatest concern about moving to southwest Virginia was changing schools.
5. Ruth Ann was disturbed when she saw the small rural school she would be attending but got used to it quickly because of the friendliness of the students and teachers.
6. Ruth Ann's move to southwest Virginia was overall a welcome change and an enjoyable experience.
7. Ruth Ann was pleasantly surprised to find that the television show Hee Haw was aired in southwest Virginia.
8. Ruth Ann loves being near all of her family.
9. Ruth Ann sees going to church on week nights and on Sundays as an important part of her life.
10. Ruth Ann's family's religion led to a conflict over whether she would attend college.
11. Ruth Ann's home being located only 30 minutes from Belvedere College helped to resolve the conflict over whether she would go to college.
12. Ruth Ann is proud of her family's farm and their dream house.
13. Ruth Ann admires her mother but does not want to spend her life cooking and cleaning like it seems her mother has done.
14. Ruth Ann would not want to return to Delaware.

Knowledge of and Attitudes Toward Appalachia

15. Ruth Ann did not know what the term Appalachian means.
16. Ruth Ann has loved the southwest Virginia area since she was a child visiting here.
17. Ruth Ann likes living in this rural area where the pace is slower.
18. Ruth Ann believes the southwest Virginia area has provided her and her family the kind of life they were longing for two years ago back in Delaware.

Knowledge of and Attitudes Toward Reading and Literature

19. Ruth Ann has loved to read ever since she can remember.
20. Ruth Ann's favorite reading material is a western novel or story.
21. Ruth Ann's love for reading has always puzzled her because neither of her parents reads very much.
22. Ruth Ann lists the Bible as the most important reading material in her home.
23. Ruth Ann found that after their move to southwest Virginia, the magazines and newspaper in her home became more "country."
24. Ruth Ann found literature to be the best part of her English classes in high school because it was easier than composition.
25. Ruth Ann would still like to read all the books on the reading lists her teachers gave her in case a professor might ask her sometime if she had read a certain work.
26. Ruth Ann had the experience of having her opinions "condemmed" in too many her high school literature classes.
27. Ruth Ann continues to love reading and experiencing new literary selections in spite of the way literature was often taught in her classes.

Table 3 (Continued)

Richard	Toni
The Cultural Scene	The Cultural Scene
1. Richard has lived in New Jersey, Louisiana, Puerto Rico, three different cities in Texas, and Virginia.	1. Toni has lived in Texas, California, Saudi Arabia, and Virginia.
2. Richard believes that living in so many locations has given him the ability to adjust to new places and people easily.	2. Toni's favorite of all the places she has lived is Saudi Arabia.
3. Richard's favorite of the places he has lived is Houston, Texas because here he was able to go to the nearby farming areas.	3. Toni liked her time in Saudi Arabia because of the climate and fascinating culture and because her parents were still together then.
4. Richard thinks he would like to live on a farm but could not handle being too far from his neighbors.	4. Toni, looking back on her childhood, remembers her mother as "always doing housework, spending time with her friends, and trying hard to please her husband."
5. Richard loves people and needs to be involved in social activities.	5. Toni remembers her father getting up early, going to work, coming home late, and bitching.
6. Richard's religion is an important part of his upbringing.	6. Toni's mother left her husband and moved back to Texas with her children after they had been in Saudi Arabia four years.
7. Richard's ambition is to be a minister of youth.	7. Toni found her new life in Texas "pressureful" because her mother had so little money and was on food stamps.
8. Richard's religious convictions have made him an orderly and meticulous person.	8. Toni hated life in Colorado where she moved when her mother remarried.
9. Richard's religious experiences have helped him to become more patient and sympathetic with people.	9. Toni experienced the most difficult period of her life following the tragic death of her mother.
10. Richard appreciates his family and is glad he has never given them any real trouble.	10. Toni believes it has been her "destiny to experience good things as a result of horrible ones."
11. Richard describes his home and community as "high classed."	11. Toni believes that having experienced so many different people and cultures helps her "to handle new situations" successfully.
12. Richard sees his church as the center of his family's community.	12, Toni is sorry that during her life she has had so little contact with her parents' families.
13. Richard hopes that college will give him further opportunity "to help minister" to those around him.	13. Toni is glad that she and her father are now living so far away from each other.
Knowledge of and Attitudes Toward Appalachia	Knowledge of and Attitudes Toward Appalachia
14. Richard had never been in southwest Virginia before coming to Belvedere College.	14. Toni never thought she would be attending college in such a rural "off the beaten track" place.
15. Richard's first impression of the Belvedere area was that it was so small and probably boring.	15. Toni initially not only worried about Belvedere being such a small town but also the strange stories she had heard about people in southwest Virginia.
16. Richard found it strange, upon first coming to Belvedere, that people in southwest Virginia did not appear to mind not having much to do for entertainment.	16. Toni, as a first-semester freshman at Belvedere, was not aware that she was living in Appalachia.
17. Richard has concluded that "in different environments people are also different."	17. Toni did not know what the term Appalachia meant but guessed that it might refer to "something related to mountains."
18. Richard did not know what the term Appalachian means but thought it sounded "kind of country" or "like a farming type of thing."	18. Toni believes that, although people exhibit "external differences," they are basically the same no matter where they live.
19. Richard, after being in southwest Virginia over a month, does not feel "closed in by all the tall mountains" like he did when he first came.	19. Toni is surprised at, but not offended by, the number of hicks that are in the southwest Virginia area.
20. Richard has found this part of Virginia to be "a nice place."	20. Toni has found the beauty of the southwest Virginia area creates a "peacefulness" in her life that she has never experienced before.
21. Richard sees going to college in southwest Virginia as temporary, because in the future he hopes to live in "a more modern and bigger area than this."	21. Toni has found the most disturbing characteristic of southwest Virginia people to be their "slow pace" of getting things done.
Knowledge of and Attitudes Toward Reading and Literature	Knowledge of and Attitudes Toward Reading and Literature
22. Richard has always done well in literature classes but has never been an "independent reader."	22. Toni prefers literature that is "captivating, full of energy, and never boring."
23. Richard prefers to read adventure and suspense stories.	23. Toni finds that "realistic literature is usually too depressing," so she does not want to have to read it.
24. Richard's favorite part of English class in high school was the class discussions of assigned literary selections.	24. Toni recalls that very little reading was done in her home.
25. Richard's English teachers valued their students' opinions on and interpretations of what they read.	25. Toni concludes that her parents kept books and magazines in the house "for decoration or in case people they knew came by."
26. Richard believes that "it is not good to view literature from only one angle."	26. Toni does not believe that her secondary education included enough emphasis on developing creativity and expression of thoughts and ideas.
27. Richard lists the Bible and Christian publications as the most important reading materials in his home.	27. Toni wants a class discussion of literature to be a "liberated session" where people share lots of different opinions.
28. Richard believes that all the books in his home could cause someone to conclude incorrectly that his family is very "into reading."	

Daniel

Daniel sits on the front steps of his grandparents' house looking at Mrs. Williams' farm across the road. It is Sunday and another hot, dry day, so typical of this summer in Southwest Virginia. As he looks at the brown fields where he loves to put up hay and groundhog hunt, Daniel can't help but wonder if Mrs. Williams can get along without his help this fall. Beside the '86 Chevy in the drive there is a stack of suitcases, cardboard boxes, and several cake tins filled with cookies his mother and grandmother have made for him over the weekend.

Suddenly he hears the sound of his grandfather's wheelchair bumping onto the porch. His grandmother is bringing Grandpa out to tell Daniel goodbye. At about the same time his dad, mother, and little brother, Davy (or Pest, as Daniel calls him) come out on their porch next door, followed soon by Aunt Lucy and Uncle Bill exiting their house located on the other side of his grandparents'. With everyone now on his grandparents' porch, the scene reminds Daniel of summer evenings here after supper; but this time it is 1:00 in the afternoon, and no one sits down in the rocking chairs and swing. Today Daniel's dad and mom are taking him up to Belvedere to start college. He is excited but already misses his family. Going only an hour and a half away, however, helps him deal with the idea of leaving home. He thinks too that it will be good to get away from Davy and the pack of younger cousins who are always bothering him; but it would not take much right now to keep Daniel from giving up the whole idea of leaving home. He remembers, though, that his parents have pushed this for a long time; and today everybody has come out here just for him--the very first one in the entire family to go to college. All the neighbors up and down the single street of his little subdivision know he is leaving; and looking at the row of houses, he sees some curtains moving and soon several of his buddies are walking toward him. Glancing across the fields again, he bets that "Granny" Williams is looking out her window at him too.

Grandpa, a retired miner and now nearly bent double from arthritis, tells Daniel to be good; and Grandma says they will be looking for him Friday evening. He knows they will be here when he comes home, for the couple never leaves the house now except to go to the doctor.

Sitting in the front seat of the car with his parents, Daniel waves goodbye to the now pretty big crowd that has congregated in his grandparents' yard. He doesn't care that Davy has asked to stay at home but waves back at him when Davy yells that he will see him on Friday. Daniel thinks that everybody will probably talk and visit on the porch the rest of the afternoon.

As they drive away, Daniel looks at his dad and mom and knows that this trip to Belvedere is a special one for them. He thinks to himself that he is at least willing and ready to give college a try.

The Cultural Scene

Daniel enjoys his life in the little Southwest Virginia community where he lives. Although he admits there is not a whole lot going on here, he likes the peacefulness of his home and the fact that all of his family and friends live close by. At this point in his life, Daniel hopes that he will never have to move anywhere else. At least, he hopes that he can "always stay in a small place like this."

A theme resulting from the analysis of the data sources is Daniel's partiality to small communities, schools, and churches. In his responses to questions concerning these aspects of his background, he continually uses the adjective "small" in his descriptions. Moreover, one reason he chose to attend Belvedere College is that it is even smaller than his high school. Knowing everyone in his environment is important to him. For example, he likes attending "a very small Free-will Baptist church out in the country":

> My father has gone there all his life too. My grandfather helped build it. They used to live near the church, and he would go early in the wintertime to start a fire in the coal stove. It's just a completely different church from ones I have seen in bigger places. It's kind of like a family.

All of the houses in Daniel's neighborhood are on one street and close together. Across the road are farms and woods where he likes to go all year around. He loves the farms; in fact, the farm land provides some of his greatest pleasures:

> I've always spent a lot of time on farms. I've just about grown up with the old woman and man that lived on the farm across from us. The old man is dead now, but his wife--I call her Granny--is still there. I just like to go over there and help her with the work and just roam around. Ever since I was twelve years old, I have worked in hay fields and tobacco. I have always loved the smell of hay barns, and I like animals. I hunt all year 'round. During the spring and summer I groundhog hunt; I usually kill thirty to forty a year. During the fall I go with my dad and grandfather--when he was able--rabbit hunting. We always keep two or three beagles. And we deer and turkey hunt too.

Daniel is proud that his life is in so many ways similar to those of his ancestors. This assertion is supported by his descriptions of the relationship he has with his grandparents. He enjoys his grandmother continually telling him that he is just like her brothers used to be. Like them, Daniel states,

> I have a great love for guns. I have eight of my own. I have taken guns apart and refinished them. To me guns are like forms of art. I love shooting; in fact, I am the best shot in my family and neighborhood.

He also enjoys taking part in his grandparents' and parents' "use of the land." The whole family continues to "put out" a garden every year, and Daniel works with them on that project. Also, Daniel explains,

> When berry season comes in, we go out and pick blackberries and raspberries. My grandmother and mother make jam and jelly out of these. We also have a small orchard on our back lot. It is made up of mostly apple trees. Every couple of years we borrow a big brass kettle and stir off a run of applebutter. The whole family is involved in this. Once the local newspaper came and did an article on it.

Knowledge of and Attitudes Toward Appalachia

Daniel is not sure where Appalachia is located, but to him the term is "synonymous with mountains." And it doesn't bother him at all to be an Appalachian:

> Appalachia is mountains. That's the first thing, and they are running down. I don't know if our area is really Appalachia, but it has always seemed like it is. It wouldn't bother me to be called an Appalachian. I would agree with it. I had an English teacher in high school. I had her the last two years, and she always talked about people who would come from up North, you know transfer to our school, and they would always have something to say about us and, you know, she would always say, "We're from the Appalachians. That's just the way we are." That's the way I feel too. It doesn't bother me any.

Daniel also equates "the country environment where [his] family has always lived" with Appalachia. His dad grew up on a farm and quit school in the eighth grade to help with the work, but later in this "country environment" he got a job as a mechanic with a coal company and married a miner's daughter from a nearby town. His father still works for the company, but now Daniel wonders about his father's future:

> Dad's went on strike lots of times. I can remember once they went on strike for about six months and they got it back, but right now in the next two weeks they're supposed to go out again. I don't know--they're having a lot of trouble now.

All of the data sources support the assertion that Daniel has a positive attitude about living in Appalachia. Although he is not used to thinking of himself as an Appalachian, he consistently refers to his "mountain" and "country" life as one that he does not want to change. Even the uncertainty of his father's job with the coal company does not appear to affect his feelings about life in Southwest Virginia.

Knowledge of and Attitudes Toward Reading and Literature

Literature has always been Daniel's favorite part of English class. He always read assigned selections, but what he especially enjoyed was any kind of adventure story. He remembers more than others the stories about the American frontier before it was tamed. He read a lot of this kind of literature in grade school and still prefers stories, more than novels, that "take place outdoors and whose main characters are outdoorsmen." Daniel continues to read for enjoyment just as he did in grade school, but mainly he likes to read when he is bored, especially, he emphasizes, "if the weather is bad and I can't do anything outside." If he could choose a plot for a story that he would really enjoy, he would have it "revolve around survival in the wild. Someone would be trapped in the wilderness, and to survive they would have to live off the land."

Daniel doesn't see reading as a part of his home and community life. He brought something home to read occasionally but "never did any school work at home." In the house there are the local newspaper, a few magazines that Daniel and his mother subscribe to, and a few books: the Bible, a dictionary, an atlas. He looks forward to his issues of Field and Stream and Outdoor Life, but generally his mother and father are "not into much reading at all":

> Dad will just flip through the magazines and look at them once in a while, but I like to read them. My mom, she gets one magazine, Family Circle or something. I'm not sure which one. But Dad does read the newspaper--that's about all.

Now that he is in college, Daniel is glad that he had a good teacher, Mrs. Thomas, in his junior and senior years who "really stressed preparation for college." Before his junior year, the English teachers, Daniel states, "never stressed a whole lot and just taught right out of the literature book that we had." Mrs. Thomas, however, had them read extra stories and novels, such as The Old Man and the Sea and Tom Sawyer, that she felt students should be familiar with. Daniel liked the way Mrs. Thomas talked about the literature:

> She said we were reading just simple novels and stories like we read in grade school, but the difference now is that back then we read things for enjoyment, and everything we read now is to find the underlying meanings and symbolism. Most of what we read was good writing that I like. That made it a lot easier.

In summary, Daniel sees the reading of literature as an enjoyable experience if the selections are ones that he can relate to and that he can understand. He especially liked literature in his last two years of high school because of his teacher's selection of works that Daniel could enjoy but that would still help prepare him for the study of literature at the college level.

Laura

The morning of her first day of classes at Belvedere Laura is awakened by her mother's gentle voice. Her days have begun this way as long as she can remember: her mother always gets up early; and before leaving for work she comes into Laura's room, sits on the bed, and they talk over their day's schedules before Laura goes downstairs to breakfast.

Sleepy-eyed, Laura tells her mother that she is awfully uptight starting classes; and, before her mother can respond, Laura quickly tells her how glad she is to be at home this morning and not waking up in a strange dorm room. Although she lives only three miles from the college, Laura had for awhile considered living on campus but decided she was not ready for that yet. Her mother laughs and tells her daughter that she is happy that she is still here too. Looking up at a family photograph Laura keeps on the dresser, her mother tells her how proud her father would be of her now.

Laura describes her Tuesday schedule to her mother, and the two make plans to have supper together this evening. They lament over how they never seem to have any time together anymore now that Laura has started her part-time job at the construction company.

Laura's mother kisses her goodbye and gives her last minute instructions--as always--about locking the house and being careful on the road. Walking downstairs behind her mother, Laura wonders if she can ever be the kind of woman her mother is. She knows her mother wants her to be successful and happy and to start her education now. Laura is proud that, so far, she has not disappointed her. Watching her mother go out to the car, she remembers all their long talks about college and the future. She is already anxious to tell her how the first day of classes has gone; and with that thought, she realizes how much she wants to get over to the campus and quickly begins preparing for the big day.

The Cultural Scene

Since the death of her father seven years ago, Laura and her mother have become inseparable. The closeness of their relationship is a theme found throughout the data sources. She admits that practically every decision she makes is based on respect for her mother's feelings. In one of her interviews she talks about a discussion she and her mother recently had about their relationship:

> I wrote a paper the other day and in it I wrote something about how so much of what I do is because of her and because I don't want to ruin the relationship we have. Well, I asked her to check over the paper for me--like she always does--and she sat down and said, "I don't understand. Do you do everything just because of me?" And then she said, "I don't want you to do things just because you think that's what I want; I want you to do them because I want you to see that it is going to help you too." I told her I didn't mean that I was doing everything for her and living my whole life for her. I said I just understood how bad it would hurt her if I did some of the things that other kids do. I was making decisions for my own good, but still in a way I was linking them to her because we are so tight. I don't know what I would do without her because we are so close.

Laura's mother teases her that now that she is going to college, she is going to get real smart and then move away and forget all about her family. Laura sees that as never happening:

> It doesn't matter how rich or famous I am, I still have my family. I do see things happening for my future but no matter where I am or if I have to move away to get a good job or whatever, I still have my family here.

Although she realizes her mother would hate to see her leave home, Laura knows her mother wants her "to go far." Right now, she is just happy that her mother is proud of her and is happy that she is starting college.

Laura is not only close to her mother but admires her greatly. She is glad that she and her mother seem to be so much alike and have a lot in common:

> She was my age when her dad died too, and she had brothers and sisters--five of them. They had it pretty hard, especially Mom who took care of them while my grandmother was out working. And you know, she saw it rough. She graduated from high school but didn't go on. And I feel like she has built herself, because she has worked and now has a good job at the courthouse. I really feel like she has done well.

Laura also gives her mother credit for her success in school. Not only would she help her with assignments but also was always willing to talk about anything related to Laura's life:

> I'd be sitting in my room and crying because I could not get the first sentence written for a paper or something, and Mom would come in there and help me and give me ideas and stuff. And other times she would spend sometimes hours discussing things with me like peer pressure--things like that.

As a result of the way she has been raised, Laura views herself as a responsible person. She is thankful that her parents always taught her the difference between right and wrong; and she appreciates now the stern, yet sensitive way, she was corrected as a child. She attributes her obedient nature to this type of upbringing.

She also sees her responsible nature illustrated by her difficult decision in high school to quit the cheerleading squad so that she could take a part-time job at a fast-food restaurant. Wanting a car of her own, Laura realized that her mother could not meet the monthly payments alone. With the job, she and her mother together could be able to handle the extra financial burden. Now she sees the wisdom of her decision, especially since having a car is a necessity to commute to college. More recently, she was offered a better-paying job with a construction company. At first she was nervous about accepting the new position and wondered if she would be able to do the type of clerical work the job demanded, but eventually she decided to try it:

> I just thought about how often I had witnessed my mother's killer instinct to overcome problems, prove her womanhood, and reach for the stars in every situation. I rose to the challenge too, and it's worked out well.

Laura enjoys the companionship of her entire family and is glad they all can be together often. Her maternal grandmother and all of her aunts, uncles, and cousins live in or near Belvedere. She sees this as an advantage because "it keeps [her] close to what everyone else is doing," and she enjoys being able to visit family members. She acknowledges that most people would probably think it weird for someone her age to enjoy being around relatives so much, but Laura, however, is not bothered by other people's opinions; in fact, she expects her friends to accept and understand her feelings. This assertion is supported by the following incident with her boyfriend:

> The other Friday night my boyfriend and I went to see my grandmother. On the way he said, "You know some people would say this is stupid--going to see your grandmother on a Friday night." But she had been in the hospital with a brain tumor and was really close to dying. She is the only grandparent I ever knew, and so I want to see her as much as I possibly can. Later, my boyfriend said, "This is really neat--coming to see you and still having a good time out on a date visiting your grandmother." I was glad he said that.

Knowledge of and Attitudes Toward Appalachia

During her first ethnographic interview Laura was completely bewildered when asked what the term "Appalachian" meant to her. The word was, she said, one that she had "never really thought about." In a later interview, however, she related what happened when she got home after that first interview session:

> When I returned home that afternoon, I told my mom about the interview and the questions I was asked. I told her I didn't understand the label "Appalachian." She seemed concerned and told me that she considered "Appalachian" those people of poorer or lower class families that live between this area and Kentucky and said that she didn't see our family as Appalachian at all. After thinking about her explanation, I better understood the label.

Laura now feels comfortable looking at "Appalachian" as a term applying to "poor and common" people; however, after thinking more about the discussion with her mother, she has decided that, while her immediate family isn't Appalachian, some of her relatives could fall into that category.

Laura has never thought of the town of Belvedere as being part of Appalachia. The town, though, has always been home to her, and she likes living here because it is so peaceful and safe. She admits that her community "doesn't have much to offer," but she likes living near her relatives and the idea of "knowing everybody else." She regrets that the first thing that comes to her mind about growing up in this area is all the criticism it receives. She explains,

> People are always making fun of Belvedere and making fun of the way I talk, and so many of my friends are always fussing about how they hate this area and how they want to get out. But I disagree with them. I like it here. I mean you don't have to worry about crime. Oh there is crime, but you don't have to worry every time you turn around someone's going to be at your backdoor. I like that about this area.

Laura does not like it when people make fun of her accent; however, she feels that if she ever leaves this area she will need to change the way she talks. "I would," she believes, "probably want to be like everyone else and talk like them, but it is not that I really want to change that much."

Knowledge of and Attitudes Toward Reading and Literature

Unlike her mother, whom Laura calls a "reading fanatic," Laura cannot "just pick up a book, and sit, and read and read and read." She has never been able to understand why her mother gets such enjoyment from reading; but if Laura does find something that is exciting, that holds her attention and "keeps on going," then she doesn't mind reading at all. She finds it "just awful," on the other hand, when she has to read something that does not spark her interest. It bothers her that she cannot share her mother's love of libraries, checking out lots of "big books, and reading them in a couple of days." It always makes her feel better when she sees her mother occasionally start reading a book and suddenly put it down because "she's not getting anything out of it."

Short stories or novels that have only a few characters are Laura's favorite type of literature. "It is better," she feels, "if the characters share the same characteristics as I do because that helps me understand the story better." A type of story that appeals to her is one that revolves around a single character, preferably her age, who faces some kind of problem. She also expects a story to provide a "learning experience" for her or at least "prove a point or teach a lesson." Her favorite story is Kate Chopin's "The Story of an Hour" because "the ending is so obvious to me but not to one of the main characters."

Laura believes that she is like most people her age who don't really dislike reading but who just

> have their minds on other things, and work, and this and that. I mean here and there you will find somebody that can just sit down and read and enjoy it, but--maybe it is bad to say--I am just not that way.

A room with lots of magazines and library books lying around is the way that Laura describes her living room. Her mother reads Good Housekeeping and McCalls but spends most of her free time reading novels she checks out of the local library every week or two. Laura buys a teen magazine occasionally, but what she reads at home is almost entirely school assignments. She continues to admire and envy her mother's love for reading and the ease with which she goes through so many articles and books. Going to the library with her mother was practically a weekly event when Laura was growing up, but after she got older looking up information for school assignments was the only reason she visited libraries.

Laura is very thankful for Mrs. Lively, the literature teacher she had in the twelfth grade:

> In her class it was like I discovered something in myself that I had never seen before. Before I started that class I really felt I could not write, and I could not read. In there I just disciplined myself because I knew I had to do the work or not graduate, and I would just have to sit in my room and close the door and read. But I liked the way she discussed everything. If there was something we didn't understand, we would just ask her, and she would try--even if it was hard for us to understand--to figure out a way to make us understand--you know--what the author was trying to do. We read some interesting things like poetry and things that we had to respond to. It was really good.

Now in college, Laura appreciates even more her positive experiences with literature and writing during her senior year. As a result of the class, she learned for the first time to place value on her own responses to what she read: "My teacher encouraged us to comment and ask questions in class, and in the class discussions I felt free to express myself." She also liked the teacher having students do a lot of response writing rather than having so many traditional tests.

Marshall

At 8:30 A.M. on the last day of August, Marshall locks the door of his basement apartment and hurries toward his car. Although his grandmother, who owns the apartment and lives above him, rarely questions his comings and goings, she hurriedly runs out onto the porch above him and asks if he is on his way to the college. Afraid that he will be late for his first class, Marshall tells her he has to be there by 9:00 and must get going but will come by and see her later that afternoon. Just wanting to wish him a good day, she sits down with her coffee and waves at him as he begins the twenty-minute drive to Belvedere. His grandmother really doesn't bother him much, but Marshall knows that she loves to talk and is glad that, especially this morning, he could get away without being rude.

Driving up the four-lane highway toward the college, Marshall feels good this morning. After one year of trying to find himself, he feels like the time has finally come when he knows what he wants.

The peacefulness and beauty of the Southwest Virginia landscape give him the same pleasure that he experienced as a little boy visiting his grandparents here. He is glad how well things have worked out and, although he misses his family, is not sorry to be away from the fast-paced life back in Maryland.

Seeing Belvedere College in the distance, Marshall, as he has done so often lately, thinks about how uncertain he was about his life last year when he graduated from high school. Working for his dad awhile wasn't bad, but he remembers how suddenly all his friends had either gone off to college or had new interests that made him feel left out. Then his grandfather died, and his grandmother needed someone with her. "I made the right decision to come here. I know I did now," he says out loud to himself. He knows that he has wasted some time but feels that he was wise to hold off on going to college. At least he is not like some of his friends back home who have already dropped out.

Marshall recalls the letter he received from his parents yesterday and thinks of what his mother said about how worried they had been when he seemed so uncertain about what he wanted. Marshall is glad that they are proud he is starting to college and pleased that the apartment is working out.

Turning into the entrance of the college, Marshall sees his new buddy, Chip, whom he met at a football game he attended with his uncle. As he says to himself, "That boy is crazy," Chip yells loud enough for everyone to hear, "Hi, Yankee!" Marshall laughs and waves, and then luckily on this busy morning on campus pulls right into a parking place.

The Cultural Scene

When Marshall moved to Southwest Virginia a year ago, he immediately sensed that people saw him as "a Yankee from up North." He realized his accent was different and knew that people here had found out pretty quickly who that new boy was living in Mrs. Conner's basement. Prior to his move, he had always had lots of friends and had lived in one place all of his life. The most difficult part of his move, Marshall explains, was "seeing myself as the new person around here--the newcomer. That was hard for me." He discovered, on the other hand, that most people he met here were friendly and "took a liking" to him, but later on some of these same people told him, "At first, we didn't know who you were and didn't like you much."

Marshall has always taken pride in his ability to make friends and feels that now he is "pretty much accepted here." He acknowledges, however, that having some relatives in the area--his grandmother and an uncle and his wife, who teach at the local high school--certainly helped him get acquainted. Being Mr. Conner's nephew or Mrs. Conner's grandson seemed to make a difference when he met people.

Since his move, Marshall has been helping his grandmother around the house and trying to be some company to her now that she is alone. He also has been "hanging out" with his uncle and aunt a lot and has gone with them to several activities at the high school.

During the year he has been here he has found life in Southwest Virginia to be a strong contrast to what he was used to in Maryland. One difference that he welcomes is that people here generally appear so much closer to each other than in Maryland; however, he finds it hard to explain why. Marshall states,

> In Maryland I lived in more of an upper-class community where you have got people who fall into certain groups both in society and in school. We never had anything like block parties. Really everyone was separated. Oh we had neighbors, but there were only a couple of them we were close to. It is not like it is here-you know inviting each other over; and when you go out and take a walk, you just talk to everybody. It's not like that at home. In Maryland there was always the sense that unless you were just real close friends with people, then you really weren't familiar with them. I guess here there is more of a family

> atmosphere, maybe because people are closer in. There is just a difference, but I still can't pick out what it actually is.

Another difference Marshall has observed since his move has to do with the amount of money he spends. Even though he does not have as much extra money as when he was working for his dad, he finds that now he is not into buying and spending to the extent he was in Maryland. The following response supports this assertion.

> Where I used to live there was so much to do and so much around me. That was the thing that kept you going. You'd get into something and you put money into it. You know, there were so many things I had at home. When I would get paid, I would go and buy something really big; but here I just find myself getting necessary things, you know, things I need. Oh, I occasionally buy something, but I think I just value money more. At home when I would go out on a typical night, like a Friday, I would spend about $20 even if there wasn't anything going on. I'd spend that much on food and going to the arcade or the movies. But here you just go out and park and talk to people, which is a good thing. I like doing that. It's just the area, I guess.

Throughout the interview and artifact data there is the theme that Marshall has found life in Southwest Virginia both intriguing and satisfying because of the connections he sees between this region and his family. For example, since childhood, he has loved to visit his grandparents and hear them, especially his grandfather, talk about their family history:

> My grandfather was a sort of idol for me, you know, a hero figure. To hear him talk about his life and growing up here and tell stories about his people, it just made me, I guess, excited. I liked hearing him; it was just as good as a movie--an exciting movie.

Marshall remembers how his grandfather always emphasized how his family had stuck together in times of trouble or crisis. Marshall is sorry that he didn't get on tape his grandfather's story of a famous feud in which his ancestors were involved; however, Marshall "remembers all of it." Although he cannot say that he approves of everything his ancestors did, he does believe that he would have stood by them.

> If I had been there, I would have supported them. I think the strength my family has today comes from them; it is what maybe molded my family, because when a crisis arrives, they bond together, and I take great pride in that. I couldn't ask for a better family.

In looking back on his life, Marshall also believes that at one time his grandfather was really the only reason that he wanted to come to Southwest Virginia for visits. However, since the death of his grandfather he has begun to see his grandmother in a new way, and she has continued to encourage his interest in family history. Talking about his grandparents, Marshall states,

> I admired my grandfather so much; and then when he passed away, I really had no desire to come back down here. But in a way my grandmother kind of took his place, which wasn't easy. She and I talk, and she's getting to the point where she reminisces a lot. She really doesn't paint clear pictures, but I can imagine them. She has told me so much, a lot of things I wish I had known earlier. She is really a unique person; I guess that's the right word.

Knowledge of and Attitudes Toward Appalachia

For Marshall the term "Appalachian" brings to mind mountains, mountaineers, and "any mountainous or rural area such as this [Southwest Virginia] area." He sees Appalachians as any people who have always lived in the mountains, but his only real frame of reference is the people in his grandmother's community near Belvedere. As examples of the Appalachian population, these people appeal to Marshall:

> One of the reasons I moved out here is because I like the people. I also like their system of doing things, like how everybody goes to football games Friday nights. You know, it seems that 100% come to the home games and maybe 40% go to the away games. I kind of like that and the way the community binds together in certain things.

Generally speaking, Marshall finds people here more caring, friendly, and outgoing than those back home. As he explains it,

> I will be walking to town, and people will see me, and I never know when they will stop and talk. Even if I've never seen them before, they act like they have known me for years. Back home it is not like that.

Marshall sees the closeness of this community where "everybody seems to know you and where everybody knows everybody else" as a nice change, but he acknowledges that living here has taken some getting used to. One thing that has especially bothered him is the poverty in the area--something he has never experienced first hand.

> I'm not used to going in a grocery store or something and seeing people on welfare, you know using food stamps. I never had to deal with that kind of think in Maryland. It just kind of makes me feel--I don't know what the feeling is--like I can't understand why this is going on. It makes me feel bad in a way, because I never before paid any mind to that part of society, you know the poverty people. I've always tried to help people when I could, but we never had that problem at home. Here the people are in a coal area, so you really meet many types. I enjoy that and like to associate with all classes of people, but I guess it really has bothered me to see so many who need help.

Emphasizing that he has to be honest about this, Marshall admits that he does not think he could live permanently in this part of the country. Although it would be a good place to grow up, the area at the present time does not offer "any security for the future." If it were not for this problem, Marshall "would definitely want to continue living here."

After a year in the area, he is still experiencing the "good feelings about this place" that have been a part of his life since childhood. His parents have always had close ties to the area, even though they moved away soon after their marriage. Marshall has always looked at his parents' move to Maryland from Southwest Virginia as "kind of a story":

> I like to think of them starting a new life and really have no idea what is would be like so far away from home. It was really a change for them. But they didn't leave this area behind. They have kept an interest in it and always brought their kids back to visit.

Along with the companionship of his grandmother, uncles, and aunt, Marshall has made lots of friends here since his move; and he likes the idea of living where his parents grew up. However, if he did not have some relatives here and had not always been familiar with the Belvedere area, he admits, without hesitation, that he "probably would not have wanted any part of it."

Marshall remembers how back home in Maryland he and his friends used to laugh at a group of boys who "wore boots and had 'beefed up' pickups with c. b.'s." He relates that "sometimes we called them rednecks and other times hillbillies." After he moved to Virginia and went back home to visit, his friends started calling him the same names and constantly questioned why he had moved "down there." Being called these names himself, plus actually living in what his friends considered "redneck country" have caused Marshall to develop "deeper definitions" of the terms redneck and hillbilly. At first, it bothered him to be called these names; but at the same time, he found himself taking up for people in Southwest Virginia. He now thinks of rednecks and hillbillies as

> people who live in an area where poverty has taken over. They get by with just the essentials and would be like a fish out of water if they were placed in a big city. But they do enjoy having a good time where they live. They just have their own way of life.

Marshall feels his friends have pretty much accepted that he is content with his move to Southwest Virginia. He now sees how often in the past he has been guilty of too quickly "categorizing other people," and hopes that his friends will come to realize the same thing.

> At one time I had a picture in my mind of what rednecks and hillbillies were like. But they just have some differences. They are just a different group, but now I wonder how they looked at me when I first came here. I think I'm pretty much accepted now, and that is a good feeling.

Knowledge of and Attitudes Toward Reading and Literature

Looking back on the reading he did in the past, Marshall concludes, "I read mainly because I had to." During the last few years, however, he has started reading more on his own, especially, he explains, "things like sports books that I can relate to." He likes to read literature if it is "entertaining." Marshall easily loses his concentration if the reading is not fast-paced and the characters are not believable. Only books with jackets conveying the message, "I'll entertain you, Marshall" get his attention.

In his home in Maryland Marshall remembers that two types of reading material were always present. First, there were a lot of history books that his parents had bought and enjoyed reading. Some of these dealt with his father's ancestors who were involved in a famous feud in West Virginia and Kentucky during the late nineteenth century. Marshall remembers these books as always "being around," and early in his life he enjoyed hearing his parents talk about these accounts. Later on, Marshall read some parts of the books that really appealed to him. He states, "I always felt that those stories were a part of me, and that just made me want to read them."

His family also subscribed to newspapers and a number of magazines, most of which related to the family auto repair business and to sports. Marshall rarely looked at the issues of Popular Mechanics and Consumer Reports but always read Sports Illustrated.

One thing that he misses in Maryland is being a part of his family's discussions that began at the dinner table and continued on into the evenings in their den. After dinner, Marshall, his parents, brother, and sister would often sit and read. Marshall usually read the newspaper, but what he liked about these times was being a part of the discussions his family members would have that usually related to current news events or other subjects they had been reading about. He recalls his father always bringing up something, and then, he states,

> we would give him our views. I enjoyed that. It seems every night there was a certain discussion. I do miss having discussions with them. That is what I miss the most I guess, you know the closeness of my family and what we did together at home.

In school Marshall read when he was given assignments but saw this as something that had to be done to fulfill a requirement. He did not approach the reading of literature with any expectations of enjoying it nor did he expect to get much out of it. Although he often found reading assignments "a burden," Marshall recalls that his teachers had a lot to do with how much effort he put into the reading. For example, his sophomore English teacher, Mr. Frazier, stands out in his mind:

> He was a vet and obsessed with Vietnam. My friends used to rattle his cage just to get him irritated. When he would get really mad, he would

> stay out of school for awhile. I felt sorry for the guy, and I would go in after class and talk to him. He really took me under his wing and confided in me, but I didn't give him a hard time. Really, he kind of made me want to do well in his class, you know to prove myself. I actually don't know whether I learned too much that year, but he did make me want to do the work.

Thinking back on his last two years of high school, Marshall does not remember much of what went on in his English classes. His senior English teacher was "a great person," but, Marshall explains, it was my senior year and I didn't really worry about the class very much. I was getting out, and I didn't pay a lot of attention."

The main criticism that Marshall has of his study of literature in school is that he never felt free to express his own opinions and interpretations in class. He remembers,

> The teachers always gave their interpretations, and I like that, but there are always different feelings about what you read. I guess we were afraid to tell a teacher we hated something and didn't see why we had to read it. And a lot of the time, I really wished I could say that because some things we read I didn't like. But, you know, you want to say you liked everything. You want to be on the teacher's side. I would rather just be able to voice my opinions without wondering what the teacher thinks of you.

Marshall believes that his English teachers could have done a better job of involving the students in their classes, but he also quickly admits, "I didn't take school seriously like I should have and could have done much more myself."

Ruth Ann

Ruth Ann and her parents and grandparents, who are visiting this week, are eating breakfast around the big oak dining table. In her usual fashion, Ruth Ann's mother is in and out of her chair, making sure everyone is getting enough to eat. While the conversation around the table goes on about usual subjects--the farm, church news, the lingering drought--Ruth Ann thinks about all that lies ahead of her today. No one has said much about it being her first day of college, but she knows that her family has never been too keen on her being a college student. Being 30 minutes from Belvedere allows her to commute, and this was the factor that led her parents and grandparents to resign themselves to her determination to get a degree in business. Ruth Ann understands and respects her family's beliefs and knows that none of them can really identify with her feelings today. When she politely excuses herself to get ready to leave, she is bombarded with reminders to drive carefully and to get home as soon as possible this evening because it is a church night.

Her mother smooths Ruth Ann's long blond hair and adjusts her new white lace collar. Her grandmother gets up from the table and motions for Ruth Ann to follow her into the hall. Taking her pocketbook from the hall tree, she quickly searches its contents, pulls out some bills, and stuffs them into Ruth Ann's skirt pocket. "Just a little gas money," her grandmother whispers. Ruth Ann responds, "Oh Grandma, you don't have to do that" and gives her a big hug. Her grandmother tells her that they will probably be gone when she gets home but that they will see her next week. Ruth Ann tells her how great it is that the family can be together so often now.

After she hugs everyone and tells them goodbye, Ruth Ann hurriedly checks her purse and orientation folder to make sure her schedule and other important papers she will need today are there and goes out to the car. Turning on the ignition of the Ford Escort her dad has gotten tuned up and all ready for her to use, she takes a deep breath and drives down the long graveled road to the main highway. Her A-frame house appears in the rear-view mirror, and on the little balcony outside the dining room she sees her family watching her leave. Although glad she is finally on her way to the college, she suddenly feels a little scared and begins--as she always tries to do at times like this--singing out loud her favorite hymn.

The Cultural Scene

Before Ruth Ann and her family moved to Southwest Virginia, they lived in a small but growing suburban community in Delaware. Ruth Ann compares the community to a resort area where only part of the population resided all year long:

> There were lots of summer homes around, but only nine of us actually lived there all year. And out of those, I would say at least half were elderly people. There was just one other family who had a daughter my age, and those were the conditions we lived in. But, overall, it was a pretty good environment.

Ruth Ann loved the river that was located near her home and spent much time boating, fishing, and swimming. Although there were few children to play with, she enjoyed her life as a "river rat" and developed close relationships with a number of elderly couples who lived nearby. One couple was especially important to her.

> They didn't have any children, and I was sort of like their granddaughter. This was when I was about twelve, and everyday after school I would go through the woods to their home. He was an engineer; and I was having trouble in math then, so he began tutoring me. I had my own personal tutor, and this went on from the seventh to the tenth grade. I moved way up and later got honors in math. I thought so much of him and his wife.

Even though Ruth Ann's family had an acre lot and were not really close to a large city, they began seeing more and more changes in their community as it began to grow. Its "resort" appearance was changing and it was certainly no longer a place "to get away from it all." The area became more congested, and Ruth Ann "didn't much enjoy that."

The entire family--Ruth Ann, her parents, and an older brother and sister--had always taken pride in their home and worked hard to keep it attractive and in good shape; however, Ruth Ann recalls that she always felt kind of closed in there:

> All the windows were very small, and I was short anyway and had to tiptoe to look out of them. And right outside of my window was a big holly tree and to the left my dad's shop. I didn't like not being able to see out. The house was also dark and I like the light.

A few years before their move, Ruth Ann's father, a truck driver, injured his back; and after a series of operations did not correct the problem, he had to stop working and take disability. By this time, the other two children in the family had married and moved away. Ruth Ann remembers that it was then when she and her parents got "the itch" to make a change.

> We were doing all right, Dad got social security, and Mom kept us all going. But Dad was always in pain and just getting tired of our whole way of life. I mean he was always itching for a change, and I guess we were all getting pretty tired of just the closeness of everything. We wanted out, you know; we wanted a more peaceful setting, something kind of relaxing.

Both of Ruth Ann's parents were originally from Southern West Virginia; and when her father's parents found out the family was considering a move, they were delighted and encouraged them to move closer to them. Ruth Ann recalls how her grandparents began looking for property for her parents to buy; and they also offered to help them financially. It seemed to Ruth Ann that their home in

Delaware was sold and a farm in Southwest Virginia was purchased "almost overnight."

For Ruth Ann the only real concern about moving from Delaware was having to change schools. She loved her school there and found her first visit to the little rural high school in Southwest Virginia "one of the hardest things" she had ever experienced.

> When I first walked into the school, my first impression was that it was so run down, compared to what I was used to. You know, it was not quite as modern, and some of the facilities were not very good, like the bathrooms. It was just so small! I remember asking someone, "Where is the upstairs?" The girl said, "There isn't an upstairs. This is it." Well, you could have just knocked me over! I looked around and said, "Please tell me there is an upstairs."

Ruth Ann believes that she got used to the new school easily because the students and teachers were so friendly. She remembers how quickly she got know everybody. Too, she recalls how the atmosphere of the school was so open and free: "You felt more free to go up and say, 'Hi, how are you doing?' I never felt this at my old school."

Analysis of Ruth Ann's interview and artifact data reveals that, other than the adjustment at school, her move to Southwest Virginia was a welcome change and an enjoyable experience. She believes that her "culture shock wasn't that bad" because she had always visited in the area and, as she states, "had already come to terms with the way people are here."

One of the most pleasant surprises for Ruth Ann after her move was to find that the television show Hee Haw was still aired in this area. The show was a favorite of hers when she was little but was no longer broadcast in her part of Delaware.

> I always liked the show. It always brought back a lot of memories of things I had seen. When I found out it was on here, I was happy and shocked too. I don't think people back home could relate to it, but I think it is funny. Oh, some of the little things they do are ridiculous, but I guess when you are familiar with the Hee Haw territory, then you can see what they are talking about in the jokes and skits. You know, around here you are risking your life if you are not watching Hee Haw on Saturday nights!

Another assertion that helps to account for the ease of Ruth Ann's move is that she loves being near all of her family. Wherever her parents are, and especially where they are happy, is where she wants to be. In addition, she and her family are happy that, upon moving to Virginia, they could start attending the Church of God that her grandfather pastors. Going to church both on week nights and on Sundays has always been an important part of Ruth Ann's life.

The place of religion in her life, however, led to a conflict she had in deciding whether to go to college. The move to the farm located only 30 minutes from Belvedere College helped to resolve the problem:

> My parents told me from the very beginning that I could not live on a college campus. I think their impression of college was based mainly on what they had seen in Delaware and Maryland. You know, things are a lot wilder up there. There's a lot more drugs and things going on in the dorms. The schools are so big up there, and it would be easy to get swamped. So I guess one of the reasons I was to agreeable to move here was because Belvedere was close by. You know, my parents would rather take a chance on me being on the road a lot than staying on campus. I guess that might sound a little bit strange, but my parents are reserved about a lot of things. They think I'll be safer, because if I was on campus, something might happen. Well, our religion influences us a lot and there are so many different beliefs than ours. I guess they could be afraid that it all might influence me wrong, that I might be tempted and just give everything up. I might end up doing anything I wanted to, you know.

Ruth Ann is thankful that her parents were able to find property in such a convenient location, and, she states, "We are all delighted with our new house."

In fact, she goes on to say, "We never dreamed of ever owning property like this." After selling their home in Delaware, the family was able, with some additional help from Ruth Ann's grandparents, to buy a 200-acre farm with a new A-frame house on it. Ruth Ann is proud of the farm and her dream house:

> It's really nice. Everyone loves it, and my grandparents even have a little trailer on it now--their get-away place. We never thought we'd have a house like this, I mean that pretty. I am not trying to brag on it; but even though we had a really nice place in Delaware, this is just in a different category. And, you know, it has big windows that go all the way up to the peak of the house. It is beautiful. I never dreamed I would have anything that good.

Ruth Ann is also thankful that her dad feels so much better living on the farm. She is pleased that "he has come so far" since the move.

> I guess he didn't have so much to do in Delaware, and more or less sat around and thought about how much he hurt. But here he has got enough to keep him busy, and he really enjoys it.

Her mother, as she did in Delaware, works hard "to keep everything neat and tidy." Ruth Ann admires her mother greatly; but although she, too, is a stickler for neatness, does not want, she states, "to spend my life in the kitchen like my mother seems to have done for the past 30 years." Ruth Ann does not like to cook; actually she has refused to learn to cook so far. One thing that "really bugs" her is "men who just get up from the table after a meal." She thinks it is unfair for women to have to do all the preparation and cleaning up. On the other hand, Ruth Ann sees herself as "a little old fashioned." Even though she wants to finish college, she would like to get married to "someone really nice" and who would be able to support her. If for some reason, however, her husband could not take care of her, then she "wouldn't mind at all going out and helping to make the living." Ruth Ann feels that her religious training has influenced these attitudes on marriage.

In sum, data support the assertion that Ruth Ann has remained happy and optimistic throughout her move from Delaware to Southwest Virginia. She would not want to return to Delaware because she loves the life she and her family have established during the past two years. As she states, "you know, I am perfectly happy just the way I am now."

Knowledge of and Attitudes Toward Appalachia

When asked about the term "Appalachian" in her first interview session, Ruth Ann sat and shook her head and laughed at her inability to respond to the word. Then suddenly she recalled hearing the term before: "Oh yes, that's it--the power company. A man that goes to our church, I believe he works for the Appalachian Power Company." Ruth Ann could not "off hand" explain where Appalachia is located, nor, with the exception of Appalachian Power, remember ever hearing the word used in a geographical context. She speculated that maybe the word has to do with "some kind of little saying that applies to somewhere in Virginia." Asked what she though her parents would say if she went home and called them "Appalachians," Ruth Ann was not sure what they would say but believed they would react more positively than if someone called them "yankees." In an interview several weeks later Ruth Ann said that now she thinks Appalachia refers to the mountains or a country setting where people have a slower lifestyle.

Although she has not thought of her present home as being a part of Appalachia, Ruth Ann has a positive view of her surroundings and "has loved it down here since childhood." She has lots of relatives in Southwest Virginia and Southern West Virginia and before her move always looked forward to coming to see them at least once a year. Then when she was sixteen, her parents decided to move here permanently. At the time, Ruth Ann wanted them to hold off leaving Delaware until she graduated from high school, but she is glad now that they came on.

> With my grandparents' help, they found a place here and just up and bought it. They brought me down and took me over to the farm to let me see how I would like it. You know, they were anxious to get my opinion on it. And, oh, I thought it was great. I loved it. It had a barn and wow, there were cows. That was something new and I really enjoyed it all. So they had my approval.

Ruth Ann likes living in this rural area where the pace is slower. She believes that life here offers her "so much more room to grow" and provides her with freedom from the congestion of a more urban area. She likes her neighbors but is glad that they live far enough away that she cannot hear them talking and fussing. She would not want to be so "out" that she could not easily call on them for help; however, she doesn't want to return to a situation where "you feel like the neighbors are living on your doorstep."

Overall, Ruth Ann has always enjoyed visiting in Southern Virginia and West Virginia and now believes that this area has provided her and her family the kind of life they were longing for two years ago.

Knowledge of and Attitudes Toward Reading and Literature

Ever since she can remember, Ruth Ann has loved to read. If she would let herself do it, she could sit down with a book just any time and do nothing but read; however, she has always fought the temptation to put more important things on the "back burner" so that she could spend time reading. Throughout her life she remembers people saying to her, "All you do is read."

The ideal reading situation for Ruth Ann is to be alone at home and have all the work she has needed to do completed. In this quiet setting she would select as favorite reading material a western novel or story. To her, the Old West is "a fascinating subject with its horses and buggies and wide open plains." She especially likes Louis L'Amour's novels because they contain the kind of story that, she states, "Once I get into it, I don't want it to end."

Although she prefers westerns, Ruth Ann likes to read any kind of novel or story that is set in the past and depicts the way people lived and how their lifestyles have changed.

Ruth Ann's love for reading has always puzzled her because neither of her parents read very much.

> You know, my sister likes to read too. But I don't know who we got if from. My dad doesn't like to read much at all; and my mother has just never had a lot of time to read. I don't think I have ever asked her whether she liked to read when she was young, but I do know that she was always busy. Ever since I can remember she has had so much to do and seldom did she read.

The most important reading material that has always been in Ruth Ann's home is the Bible. It was and remains, she emphasizes, "the most important book in our house and our preference--what we wanted to read. Prior to their move to Virginia, the family also would "occasionally" have some magazines in the house. Once in a while her dad would buy a sports magazine, and her mother would have "something like Country Living that she had bought or more likely borrowed from someone." In addition, the daily newspaper always came to their home, but mainly Ruth Ann's father wanted it for three sources of information: the sports news, the stock market reports, and news about the different horse tracks in the area where they lived. Other than these items and the comics, which Ruth Ann has always loved, the paper was not read very thoroughly.

After their move, Ruth Ann observes that, with the exception of the Bible, the reading material in her home changed considerably. First, she found the change in newspapers to be a "big shocker."

> Before the move we got a big, thick newspaper, but once we came here, we started getting the local paper. When I first looked at it, I said, "You've got to be kidding." It was like this wasn't a paper at all.

Two years later, Ruth Ann has now gotten used to the little Belvedere newspaper and generally enjoys it, but she still cannot accept what she calls "the land gossip," that is "things like who went to whose house for dinner, etc." appearing in a newspaper.

A second change that has occurred with reading in Ruth Ann's home is her parents' new interest in subscribing to magazines that deal with rural living, such as Farm Journal and Southern Living. Ruth Ann enjoys looking at these, but Reader's Digest still remains her favorite magazine because "it is one of the most interesting magazines you can find." Her grandfather continues to give her a subscription each year.

In school, Ruth Ann remembers that she was always in the top reading groups throughout the elementary and middle school grades. Her teachers encouraged her interest in reading; and looking back, it seems to her that she was "always wandering to the library to pick out something." She especially remembers her "Nancy Drew stage" and all the autobiographies she read.

In her English classes, she always liked "the literature part the best because it was easier than composition." In a number of her classes she was given reading lists, and it was no problem for her to get a lot of the works completed. She has held on to the lists because she wants to remember what she read. Also, she states, "I would like sometime to read all the suggested books in case a professor might ask if I had read such and such a book."

In terms of the way literature was taught in both secondary schools she attended, Ruth Ann primarily recalls predictable step-by-step class sessions, lots of objective questions, and staying up late at night to get her literature notebook finished.

> It seems we always read the biographical sketches first, then we read their little works, and the next day we had to do questions, and I remember a lot of questions. Sometimes the teacher would go over these and sometimes not. Occasionally we would have a quiz--concrete things--to keep you from getting behind. I needed that because I'm a procrastinator. I'd just put the questions off; and you know, just when our notebooks were due, I would have maybe five stories to do the questions on. So I'd be up late. I always had everything done, but I just didn't like doing that.

Ruth Ann also did not like being in English classes where she feared being criticized or "condemned" if her opinions and interpretations did not correspond to those of the teacher. This was her experience in too many of her classes. She believes that when people discuss what they read, "they need to have the chance to talk about their ideas and know they are not going to be condemned for it." While the experience she had during her senior year, in particular, did not change her feelings about reading and literature, she hopes she is never in such an uncomfortable situation again:

> In the English class I had last year, I would just feel terrible if I happened to put my teeth into something the teacher didn't like. He was just so sarcastic, and that really bothered me. If he had just flat out yelled at me, I could have handled it better. I would not contribute or say a lot in class because I didn't want to be put down and be made to feel I was wrong.

From the interview and artifact data, Ruth Ann's reflections on her past school experiences with reading and literature support the overall assertion that she continues to love reading and experiencing new literary selections in spite of the way literature was taught in her classes.

Richard

After traveling for three and a half hours across the state of Virginia, Richard, his dad, sister, and girlfriend are happy to see "Belvedere 30" on a sign in the distance. Although the new Lincoln has lots of room and the air-conditioning is working well on this hot August day, everyone is tired and bored with the interstate.

Richard and his girlfriend, Sandy, are in the back seat. His dad is driving, and Susan, his sixteen-year-old sister, sits beside him reading a book. As they get nearer to the town where Richard is going to college, they begin to look closer at the countryside and notice the names of the towns and secondary roads on signs along the highway. All of a sudden, Sandy reads aloud, "Buzzard Run Road" and exclaims, "Oh Rich, when I come to visit, you'll just have to take me up there!" Richard pats her on the shoulder and mumbles, "Sure."

The first time Richard had come to Belvedere to see the campus, he had not paid that much attention to the Southwest Virginia landscape. This time, however, he cannot keep his eyes off the increasing number of mountains that seem to be getting taller and taller as he gets nearer to his destination. In all the places he has been, there were never this many mountains and trees. Being used to cities, he hopes he can adjust to this area as successfully as he did to all the other places he has lived.

As they enter the Belvedere city limits, it is late afternoon. Everyone in the car begins commenting on how calm and quiet everything seems to be for a Saturday afternoon. To them, there are few people around and the traffic is light.

Now it is his dad's turn to give Richard a hard time. "Gee, Rich," he says, "Sandy is not going to have to worry about trusting you down here. I haven't seen a girl anywhere." Richard replies, "Oh, I'm sure they are around," and winking at Sandy, says, "Just wait 'til we get to the campus."

Richard sees the Holiday Inn up ahead where he and his parents spent the night the first time they came to Belvedere. When his dad puts on the signal to turn into the motel entrance, Richard suddenly feels glad that his dad decided it would be better to come down the day before the dorms opened so that they could have plenty of time to help him get to know his way around and settle in.

After checking in and going to their rooms, they call Richard's mother, who has had to stay at home with her invalid father, to tell her they arrived safely.

Then before going out to eat, they check the church directory in the motel lobby and decide where they will attend services the next morning.

The Cultural Scene

Because of his father's job as a consulting engineer, Richard has lived in many locations. He remembers very little about New Jersey, where he was born, but recalls the years his family spent in Louisiana, Puerto Rico, and three different cities in Texas. Then when he was a junior in high school, his father was transferred to Eastern Virginia. Richard believes that living in so many places has been a great advantage for him:

> Not only have I learned to get along with people; but because I've moved around so much, I think it's easier for me to learn things, you know catch onto things quickly. I had to do that with changing schools so much.

He also feels that, because of his different experiences, he has the ability to adjust to new places and people easily. Looking back on his life, he has only one regret: that he could not continue the many friendships that had to end when he would move.

Mainly because he was there for the longest period of time, Richard's favorite of all places he has lived is Houston, Texas. During the eight years there, he had so many different experiences, but the one that he enjoyed the most was getting to go to the farming areas around the city. "I really liked that," Richard states. "I used to ride horses and just enjoyed all the neat things you could do on a farm." Ever since then, he has thought it would be a good life to have a family and live on a farm; however, he would not want to live where it was too isolated. "I could not handle," he emphasizes, "living two or three miles away from any neighbors."

As his statement about not wanting to be isolated illustrates, Richard loves people and needs to be involved in social activities. All of the data sources used for Research Question #1 support this assertion. He continually stresses that his lifestyle allowed him to meet new people and helped him to relate well to them. He has been popular wherever he has lived and quickly became involved in organizations. For example, during the one year he lived in Eastern Virginia before coming to Belvedere, he immediately became active in his school and church.

> I hadn't been there anytime until I was elected treasurer of the youth council at church, and then I found myself the new president of the young men's organization. At school, I had an office in the German Club. I held three offices in one year. It was tight, but I did it.

A dominant theme resulting from the analysis of Richard's data sources is the importance of religion in his life. The development of his religious beliefs is a significant aspect of his background. It is, he states, "the very first thing that comes to my mind as far as the way I have been brought up." Because he enjoys involvement in church youth groups, his ambition is to be a minister of youth; and he firmly believes that God is calling him into the ministry.

> It may not necessarily be a youth minister or pastor, but I do know that God is calling me. Here at college I was recently elected as a freshman representative for the Christian youth council, and I was overwhelmed to be chosen. I feel that it is just another way that God is preparing me for the mission ahead.

Although Richard grew up in a religious home, it was not until his freshman year in high school that he became a Christian. "Before," he explains, "I used to cuss and do all kinds of stuff, and I was into heavy metal rock." Now, however, he is thankful for the example of his parents, all they taught him, and what he calls "the standards" of his faith and church. This experience, he feels, has changed him into an orderly and meticulous person:

> The standards I have accepted have changed me. Unlike the way I used to be, I am now very neat in all respects. If you would walk into my room right now, you'd find it really neat. There is nothing out of place. I'm so glad now for the manners my parents taught me. Really, the church has affected my lifestyle so much.

His religious experiences have also helped him to become more patient and sympathetic with people. Richard used to resent the time and attention his parents would give people who had problems and would come to them for help. Now, however, this is the characteristic of his family that he is so proud of. He, personally, has found it easier to accept people and to show concern for them because of his parents' willingness to help others.

> I think the most wonderful thing about my family is that they have taken in other family members and friends in time of need. They have shown me what true sincerity and love are all about. They allowed my two cousins to move in because they had no real home or family. We fought for two years for my younger cousin to be with us. Then this past summer, we moved my grandfather from Florida to live with us. The doctor said he couldn't live by himself anymore. And my older sister has been living with us too. She has a little boy. It used to be pretty much the five of us at home, but it's gotten bigger! It's hard for my mom, but we all help her. We look out for each other.

Because of their example, Richard appreciates more than ever the kind of family he has. He is glad that they are proud of him too and that he has never given them any real problems:

> I'm their first child to go to college, and they are proud, I guess you could say. It sounds kind of bad when I say this, but I have always been their favorite. I'm their only son and, you know, I have never really given them problems as I grew up. They specifically told me

> before I left home that they are proud of me and wished me well. My father always told me that it didn't matter where I went to school, that he would find the money to pay for it. He just wanted me to go.

One reason that Richard finally decided to attend Belvedere College was that he felt the cost would not present as much of a financial burden on his parents as would some other schools he had investigated. In reaching his decision, Richard explains that he considered his family's situation:

> I thought about all the changes that had come about in our home recently. I didn't want to put too much of a burden on Mom and Dad. I thought about us having a big family and Dad the only one supporting us. Dad does okay, but I wouldn't want to put so much on him. This college is definitely less expensive than some others I looked into.

The first words that come to Richard's mind when asked to describe his present home and community is "high classed." He explains that his family lives in one of the wealthiest parts of his city; however, he adds, "It's got a neat country club and all that kind of thing. But I wouldn't classify our family as wealthy, because we are not--oh no. But we make it." Just like everywhere else they have lived, Richard's community has different types of people. He states, "Some we know are easy to deal with, but some are pretty snobby and all." The people, though, that he and his family see as making up their "true community" are those with whom they attend church. "The church," Richard explains, "is the first priority as far as where we live. We searched and visited several when we first moved and soon found one we all liked. It is really the main connection we have with our community."

A final assertion related to Richard's cultural scene is that he hopes college will give him further opportunity "to help minister" to those around him. He hopes he will always be a good example and influence. This assertion is supported by an incident he shared during his final interview. On that day he had gotten word that a friend of his back in Texas had recently been seriously injured in an automobile accident. Richard was especially concerned that his friend had been drinking:

> He may be paralyzed. The accident's made even worse because of the drinking. I can remember when Steve and I used to go out drinking at parties and how scared we were of getting busted by our parents. I was a little older than Steve, and I feel like I was a bad influence on him then. I know my standards are different now. I sometimes wonder where I would be if they hadn't changed.

Knowledge of and Attitudes Toward Appalachia

During his last year of high school in Eastern Virginia, Richard began the process of selecting a college to attend the next year. During a conversation with Richard, his pastor happened to ask him if he had considered Belvedere College. Richard, having lived in Virginia only a year, had to look up Belvedere on the map; he had never been to Southwest Virginia and had no idea what the college nor the Belvedere area was like.

When he and his parents came to visit the campus the first time, Richard was "shocked": "I though I was lost! I got here and thought to myself, 'I don't think I will be able to get along here. You could get bored real easy around here.' It was just so small, and I was used to cities." After visiting the campus, however, Richard felt better. His parents were impressed, and so he eventually decided Belvedere would be his choice.

In his first interview, which took place about three weeks into the fall semester, Richard was asked what the term "Appalachian" meant to him. While he believed he had heard the word before, he had no idea what it referred to but added, "It sounds kind of country, yeah, something like a farming type of thing."

Even though coming to Belvedere has demanded some adjusting, Richard, after being at college over a month, did not regret his decision to attend the school. He did not feel as "closed in" as he did by all the tall mountains; and, generally, he found this part of Virginia to be "a nice place." But just as he looked at the other places he has lived, Richard sees Belvedere as a temporary location where he is going to school, making friends, and enjoying life. He plans to stay at the college and complete his degree, but, as far as his future is concerned, he hopes to live in "a more modern and bigger area than this."

Knowledge of and Attitudes Toward Reading and Literature

Richard is proud that, although he has had to continually change schools throughout his life, he has always been an A and B student. He has always done well in English, most always getting A's, and believes that he has received quality instruction in literature and composition. Richard, however, admits that he has never been an "independent" reader. He always read whatever was assigned but only "occasionally" read something of his own choosing. Although he mainly looks at literature as just another school requirement, he still has definite views on the kinds of literature he prefers:

> Anytime I read an adventure or suspense story, I really get into it. But I would rather read stories that don't take so long to read and that have in them some moral that I can relate to my life. I like a character who conquers over evil or who deals with a moral dilemma of some kind. I don't care what the setting is, just as long as I can be kept interested in the story.

One particular selection that kept Richard's interest was To Kill A Mockingbird. He remembers "feeling good" about reading this novel not only because of the type of book it is, but also because its length surprisingly did not bother him.

Richard's favorite part of high school literature classes was the discussions. He not only liked being able to express his views on what his class read but also enjoyed "seeing what the teacher would throw in about a story or whatever." He always asked questions and knew his teachers liked his doing that. He concludes, "This is the way I learned, and I never hesitated to ask a question." Furthermore, he liked the fact that his teachers placed value on students' opinions and interpretations, because for Richard, "it is not good to view literature from only one angle."

In Richard's home the main reading materials are the Bible and Christian publications. The entire family reads these books and periodicals, but they never have group discussions. "Everyone," Richard states, "just reads by themselves; but when I have a family, I want to have family discussions and share and be open. I think that is neat."

Richard believes that if a stranger were to walk into his home, the person would immediately think his family was very "into reading." Such an observation, he explains, really isn't true.

> In our living room we have a whole slew of books. Some we use; some we don't. We have shelves of them. There is a cabinet in each corner of the room with at least two or three shelves of books. We might skim through them or something but we don't necessarily read them.

In addition to biblical literature, many of these books are reference works, such as encyclopedias and medical books. Also, the family has always taken a newspaper and subscribed to Newsweek; but considering again the place of reading in his home, Richard concludes that, except for the Bible, not that much reading is actually done:

> My mom is more of a homemaker than a reader. She is always doing work around the house; and when she gets a break, she just sits down. And Dad is always busy with his work. But we do try to read the scriptures as often as we can.

Toni

If her dad says, "You're really going to like this place" just one more time, Toni thinks she is going to commit murder. There could not be anything much worse than being cooped up in the car all day with her dad; but this time, however, she had no choice. Today he is bringing her to enroll at Belvedere College; and, as they get nearer to the school, Toni is not feeling any better about being here than she did back in June when they had first come down to see the college. Although she likes the beautiful scenery and the pretty homes she is seeing, Toni can't help but think how much this place looks like that dreary little town in Colorado where she lived before moving to Northern Virginia. Hearing her dad repeat once again, "You'll enjoy living in a small town. It will be good for you," Toni can only roll her eyes, bite her tongue, and hope this trip will soon be over.

Exiting the interstate and going into Belvedere, Toni's dad gets behind a car that is practically creeping down the narrow street. Toni sees that he is getting irritated, but then he says, "Now you have to remember that in a little place like this things are slower. You have to remember that." While she knows that her father was raised in a small town over fifty years ago, Toni thinks to herself that he would never live in a place like this now. Besides that, he is usually wrong in her eyes, so she decides not to pay any attention to whatever else he has to say.

Toni looks at her watch; and seeing the Belvedere College sign up ahead, realizes that they are arriving over two hours before the dorms are officially to open. "That's my father," she sarcastically mumbles under her breath.

At the college, they park in the Nelson Hall lot. Her father tells Toni to go and see if she can check in early, so she gets out of the car and slowly walks toward the women's dorm she knows is hers. Seeing no one going in or out of the building, she wanders on in, finds a door marked "Residence Advisor," and knocks. A young woman opens the door, and Toni asks if she can go ahead and bring her things in. Appearing pleasant and helpful, the R.A. starts talking, but Toni does not quite understand her. The woman's unfamiliar accent totally takes her by surprise. Toni never does quite grasp what all the R.A. tells her but understands that she can go on up to her room. Back at the car, she tells her dad that she can't believe the R.A.'s drawl and wonders if everybody here talks that way. "I have never in my life heard such a hick accent," she states. "At least, I think that's what it was." Amused, her dad tells her she will get used to it.

After he helps her carry everything up to her room, Toni's dad sits down for about five minutes in her desk chair. People begin trickling into the dorm, and Toni tells him that he doesn't have to stick around. She knows he is in a hurry to go on to North Carolina today on some kind of business.

As they walk together out to the car, Toni's dad tells her that she will be fine here; but, although she doesn't, Toni wants to say, "Well, I got accepted here; it's a good distance from you; and by the looks of things, I can't get into much trouble; therefore, I know why you think I'll be fine." Telling her to call, he gets in the car; puts on his sunglasses; and,throwing up his hand, drives out of the parking lot. Toni takes a deep breath; and turning toward the dorm, says to herself, "I've been through a lot and survived, and I'll survive this too."

The Cultural Scene

During the first nine years of her life, Toni lived in Texas, Colorado, and two different locations in California. Her father's career was in the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers; and after his time in California, his next assignment was Saudi Arabia. The four years Toni and her family spent there were the best time of her life. She describes her lifestyle before this move as "very, very low." Although at the time she was not aware of how little her family had "materialistically," she does recall the sudden change in their life once in Saudi Arabia:

> When we moved to Saudi, my father did some things for the government, probably illegal as far as I can tell now, where he got a whole lot of money. After we had been there a couple of years, I started to realize the difference between other people who had less than myself and my family. Also I started asking for things and taking advantage of my father's income.

While Toni now believes that the economic change that occurred with her family at this time was not necessarily a good influence on her, she admits that these years were the favorite time of her life: "I loved the place, its weather, its people, everything." Toni also looks positively at this period of her life because her parents were still together. While she remembers conflicts in her household, she was not really aware of her mother and father's problems at that time. Her life then was so full of activities that, actually, she spent very little time at home.

> I was a very happy child at that time. Everyday my little brother and I would run over to the other side of the compound where we lived then to catch the school bus. The bus was about ten minutes from our villa. Then it was forty-five minutes to the outskirts of the city to where the International Community School was located. After school, we'd come home, and I never did any homework. Never. I'd just run in, get something to eat, and I was gone--out playing with friends or at swim practice. Sometimes at night I'd sneak out of the house to be with my friends. We'd play manhunt and all kinds of things until maybe one or two in the morning. Just a whole bunch of us would play or just sneak around other friend's houses trying to wake them up without anybody knowing. I got caught once for breaking and entering and almost got kicked out of the compound for doing that. Hey, I didn't care; I wasn't even afraid of the compound guards with their guns and knives. But I have never really been bad at all. I just enjoyed life there.

Toni remembers her mother, who did not work outside of the home, always doing housework, spending time with her friends, and "trying hard to please her husband." Looking back at her mother's life then, Toni realizes that she was so unaware of all her mother was experiencing:

> She was so wonderful. I just can't believe how she was. Even through all the crap that was going on in her life, she was still so happy on the outside and so unhappy inside. Somehow she dealt with everything.

Toni mainly remembers her father getting up early, going to work, and coming home late; however, she recalls that upon his arrival, each evening was basically the same: "He would come in bitching, eat his dinner, bitch some more and then go to bed."

After living in Saudi Arabia four years, Toni suddenly found herself back in the United States. Her mother had announced to Toni and her brother that they were leaving their father and going with her back to Texas. At the time, Toni did not understand why her mother was leaving; however, over the years she has realized how difficult it was for her mother to be married to this man.

The most difficult aspect of this move, Toni found, was the loss of a comfortable life with plenty of money:

> My mother had never been on her own before, and here she was with two children. I went from having money to having nothing at all. We even ended up on food stamps. Oh, it was very, very pressureful for me.

Toni hated living in Texas, but after her parents' divorce settlement and her mother's financial situation improved, she began "to loosen up and become an independent individual."

> I met Sophie, a preacher's daughter but wild as they come, and we were great friends and had a lot of fun together. I began to feel better about myself, but I don't think anyone else saw me any differently though. I think I just became pretty strong then and developed my own inner beliefs about myself. You know, I think I realized that you just need to be yourself no matter what. And you need to be a good person--my mother never stopped teaching me that.

Toni believes that this time in Texas was when she "found herself" and came to know the type of person she really was. Moreover, she states, "I knew what I needed to work on in my life and what I didn't." This frame of mind prepared Toni for her mother's announcement that she was going to marry again and they all would be moving to a small town in Colorado. Because her step-father tried "to manipulate and persuade [Toni] in just about every way possible," she found life with him "terrible." As she explains, "I was used to being, basically, the boss of my family. My mother let me run and do what I wanted, but my step-father didn't allow that. My brother and I simply could not stand him."

The "terrible" life in Colorado, however, lasted only four months. Toni and her brother found themselves living once again with their father, now stationed in Northern Virginia, after their mother, while driving home one snowy night, was killed instantly in an automobile accident. Toni acknowledges that this was the most difficult experience of her life; but three years later she sees that it was an example of how "good things do come out of terrible things that happen in your life, especially if you believe they will." Toni discovered, upon coming to Virginia to be with her father, how "completely naive to the world" she really was. However, she believes now that the discovery was a valuable learning experience:

> For some reason I had not until this time been into sex, drugs, or drinking. I hadn't even really known about these things. In Virginia, I discovered it all and, in a sense, lost almost all my innocence. Some people might say it was ignorance, but you can look at it however you wish. But, even after all that happened, I loved being in Virginia. It was wonderful, and I wouldn't trade it for the world. I've learned a lot and I can't help but think if Mom had never died--oh, I'm not saying I'm glad for her death, but I just wonder--I know I probably wouldn't have ever come to college.

An assertion supported by each data source used for Research Question #1 is that Toni believes it has been her "destiny" to experience good things because of "horrible" ones. Also, she emphasizes that because of all she has been through. she knows that she can deal with whatever life brings:

> I think of all that I've been through with my mother, my father--just horrible. But I know that no matter what happens with my life, I'll make it, because I have had to for so long.

As she begins her first year of college, Toni is proud of the "inner strength" she possesses and believes that it will help her to succeed.

Another aspect of her life that Toni sees as important is her extensive travels. Although she cannot remember all of the places and experiences she has had through her travels around the world, Toni feels that having experienced so many different people and cultures helps her "to handle new situations." Toni states, "Of all the places that I have been, Saudi Arabia had the most impressive culture that I know of." The ways that the people's lifestyles and beliefs there are tied so closely to the Moslem religion continue to interest her; and she believes experiencing this culture may have had an influence on her own religious views:

> Religion is important to me. I don't go to church. I have nothing to do with any church, but I have a strong belief in God. I always knew He loved me and thought I was the best. That has helped me not to blame myself when things are terrible. I just believe that when I make a decision, no matter how things turn out, I need to give myself credit for trying to do something and taking a stand.

In contrast to her vivid recollections of Saudi Arabia, Toni does not remember many of the places where her family vacationed and visited in Europe when she was a child; but even though there are too many "vague memories," she sees that her travels taught her about life and helped her to appreciate the United States.

> I've been all over Europe. Every vacation, Christmas, Easter, everything, we always traveled in Europe because it was way too far to go back to the States. And oh, what an experience it was! I would not recommend adults taking their children when they are as young as I was, because now I don't remember so much of what I saw; but in a way I have seen it all. I would give anything to go back and really take advantage of, you know, Greece, Rome, Egypt--riding camels, seeing the pyramids. All of that. It was beautiful. And riding the old trains that would go through mountains--very old chugga-chugga trains--nothing brand new but rattling and shaking with the passengers afraid of tumbling over the mountain sooner or later. Oh, I loved that but was always happy to come back to the States. I would never want to live over there--anywhere over there--all of the time.

In addition to regretting being so young when she did most of her traveling, Toni is sorry now that during her life she has had so little contact with her parents' families. Actually, Toni does not know much about her father's and mother's backgrounds. This was a subject that her parents rarely discussed. She explains,

> They were both born and reared in Kentucky--in the sticks--but I don't know much about that because they never discussed their past very much. If I ever asked my father anything, I'd get little short, quick answers and that's it--really nothing. And my mother just never said much. I wish now that she had shared something of that with me. I would have had a little bit more to remember her by, but no, she didn't.

Other than her father and brother, Toni has no relationship with any of her family members; in fact, she has met only a few of her relatives. Her grandparents are deceased, and her paternal grandmother is the only one she remembers:

> My mother and her mom didn't get along, so we never visited there. When I was very little, we did visit my dad's mom, Mary, in Texas on holidays, and I'd always cry every Christmas when I had to leave her. That relationship was good. But she died a number of years ago. Really with our moving all around, we didn't see her much.

The analysis of Toni's data reveals the theme of her independent individuality. As with her lack of contact with family, she has never seen herself as part of any community of people. She emphasizes that, with the exception of sports, she has never been a part of "a real big group thing." She states, "I've always been an individual--just one on one." As she begins her first year of college, on the other hand, Toni is happy and a little surprised that she has already gotten involved in some campus organizations and has found them enjoyable. She is happy she followed the advice of one of her teachers:

> One of my high school teachers said, "Now Toni, don't go down there and sit in your room." I didn't forget what he said, so I've tried to get involved more. Maybe the reason I've enjoyed it is that I knew being

> a part of things is something I needed to do. I've definitely been able to be myself at college--not something fake, and I'm glad for that.

Toni is also glad that she and her father are now living so far away from each other. She knows he is relieved that she is continually becoming more satisfied at Belvedere and not complaining about how unhappy she is. More importantly, though, Toni is happy that coming to Belvedere has proved to be a good move for her. She is finding, as she has witnessed so many times before, that "good times can come from what at first appears bad."

Knowledge of and Attitudes Toward Appalachia

Even though she is well into her first semester at Belvedere, Toni still cannot believe that she ended up at this little college. She admits that her GPA and class standing certainly did not bring many positive responses from the numerous colleges where she applied, so she is thankful that Belvedere did accept her. Toni, however, never thought that she would be attending a college with an enrollment less than half of her high school and located in such a rural "off the beaten track" area. While she initially had mixed feelings about the college and Southwest Virginia, she is now finding that the concerns and fears she had have begun to disappear.

Upon being notified of her acceptance at Belvedere, Toni's father insisted that they go down to look it over. Finding that Belvedere was such a small town was the first thing that disturbed Toni, but what really worried her was the stories and descriptions people in Northern Virginia had related to her about what it was like in the Southern part of the state:

> I heard rumors that all the people here look the same because they are in-bred. They told me it was a mining area--just like in the old

> days--and the people had black teeth. And I was really expecting to see these things.

As she first observed the Belvedere area, Toni was surprised--and relieved--to see beautiful scenery, pretty homes, a lovely campus, and people who looked like any other population she had ever seen; however, everything being so small and everyone obviously knowing everyone else's business gave her "a sick feeling" that she could not get rid of. The whole scene was just too reminiscent of the small town in Colorado where she lived before moving to Virginia.

As a first-semester freshman at Belvedere, Toni was not aware that she was now living in Appalachia. The only meaning that the term "Appalachian" had for her was "something related to mountains"; however, she did not know why she connected the term with a mountainous area and apologized for appearing "stupid" because she could not correctly define the word.

After being at Belvedere for several weeks, Toni is finding that the "rumors" she had heard about Southwest Virginia are not true. In addition, she is making some discoveries on her own that further support her philosophy that, although they exhibit "external differences," people are basically the same everywhere. The external differences, Toni believes, have to be dealt with and accepted, and she is thankful that she has learned to adapt to new situations successfully.

One surprising discovery was finding that Southwest Virginia and Southern West Virginia are "so full of hicks."

> I didn't know the people here had accents like they do. I wasn't expecting any of that. When I first got here, I couldn't understand what a lot of people were saying. I'd say "excuse me" over and over. Then finally I got to where I could at least follow along like I understood. Other people's accents weren't so strong, but I had no idea

> there were such hicks, you know, country people in this area. I had no idea.

Toni defines a hick as "a redneck or a person who was born and raised all their life in a small town or maybe on a farm." She does not believe that being a hick is necessarily something bad. "The guy or girl," Toni states, "probably rides in a Ford truck with a rebel flag and wears blue jeans and has long, uncombed hair--just that type of person." The hicks that Toni encountered in Appalachia do not offend her but simply have been a surprise because they are so numerous. Really, she finds them, and especially their accents, "kind of neat" because they are another example of the ways people differ "externally" throughout the world.

> You know, I like the accents. I even notice once in a while that I say little things like "fanger" for finger, but, my goodness, I'm so used to different people and the different ways they live. I'm used to the externals.

Toni emphasizes that "when it comes down to it, people are people whether they're hicks or anything else."

Since coming to Belvedere, Toni has never stopped marveling at the beauty of Southwest Virginia. She believes that the environment has helped to create a "peacefulness" in her life she has never really experienced before. Moreover, although at first she had real concerns about the location of the college, she now is glad that it is so far away from home. At the same time, however, she thinks it is "kind of ironic" that she will find herself saying to people, "Yes, I like it here, but I prefer the city and will live in a city after college."

In conclusion, the Appalachian region has surprised Toni in a number of ways, but every other place she has lived has also had its own unique characteristics that she has either liked or disliked. For Toni what essentially makes the Southwest Virginia area different form any other place she has lived is its "beautiful mountains and so few people." Each data source supports the assertion that, while Toni has identified some "external" qualities of Southwest Virginia people, she basically does not see them as any different from people anywhere else. As Toni states,

> I swear to God, people are the same wherever you go. I've never really seen much of a difference among people. People in the city may tend to be more corrupt, but you'll find people here being corrupt too. There are accents everywhere; and people can love and hate and all those things just the same no matter where they are.

Knowledge of and Attitudes Toward Reading and Literature

Toni's attitude toward reading and literature is that, while she has never read very much except what her teachers assigned, she enjoys literature as long as it is interesting and keeps her attention. She prefers literature that is "captivating, full of energy, and never boring." Moreover, she wants any story or novel that she reads to have "a happy or at least a hanging ending." If she chooses to read something, she wants the selection to contain characters who find happiness in their lives. From Toni's point of view, "realistic literature is usually depressing," so she does not want to have to read it. She states,

> Real life has enough hard times and sadness, so I don't want to have to read about it. I really don't want to read anything realistic because I've lived enough realism. If I have to read something that is too serious or sad, my reaction is, "Why in the world do I have to read about this?"

When she does read literature, Toni admits that she "loves to read between the lines." Because of doing this, however, she often finds reading frustrating and disappointing:

> I read things into a story or whatever. I'll be reading something and I'll think, "Okay, that means something." I get upset with myself and try

> to stop doing it because I'll often get to the end of a story and what I picked out as meaningful or what I expected to mean something didn't mean a darn thing. The story just ended. Blah, And here I am just sitting there kind of let down. I feel like I'm wrong, and I don't like that. And too, I really get upset if a story turns out the normal way when I expected a very different outcome.

Toni emphasizes that reading was never a part of her home environment. She does not remember ever being told or prompted to read at home. The only time that she can recall her family reading anything together was at Christmas. It was a tradition for her mother to "pull-out" a copy of The Night Before Christmas and read it to Toni and her brother. She regrets that reading was not a more important part of her childhood; however, she feels her varied life experiences compensate for what she missed through reading.

> When I was little, all I ever did was just what I wanted. I swear there was very little reading--really none, just none--at home. But I just think I know so much because of all I have been through. At home my sports interests and what I could do as an individual were pushed. But really there was never any emphasis put on school and certainly never any on reading.

Before Toni's mother and father divorced, she remembers that their home was filled with books and magazines. Her mother always had Cosmopolitan and Better Homes and Gardens "spread out neatly" on the coffee table. Her father had shelves of "many years of National Geographic," and in the house there were "bookcases and books and books and books." Looking back to that time, Toni now finds it amusing that she does not remember anyone in the house ever reading any of these things; and she adds,

> Gosh, I never read them either, I would just shove the magazines over to the side or onto the floor when I needed a table to play cards or something. It's funny, but nothing was ever read.

Toni's father also subscribed to Playboy, but this magazine was always kept out of view. She remembers him saying how good the articles were and how much he enjoyed the cartoons, but she never saw the magazine in their home. She recalls seeing her mother with a Cosmopolitan "once in a while," but Toni concludes that the books and magazines displayed in her house were purchased mainly for "status." She believes that it was important for her parents "to have the current monthly magazines out on the coffee table for decoration or in case people they knew came by."

During her past three years in Northern Virginia, Toni has found it amusing to see her father turning into an avid reader. Health problems have not allowed him to continue his sports activities, so now he spends about all his spare time reading. Toni's new step-mother also loves to read, and Toni feels she has influenced her father to read more. Toni's own attitude toward reading, however, has not changed; and she sees herself as pretty much like most of her friends who simply did not have the time to read anything other than what they had to do for school.

> I was never aware of any of my friends doing any extra reading on the side. Let me tell you, no one had time. We were very busy. We started at the beginning of our junior year studying and prepping for S.A.T.s. You just had other stuff to do--too much other stuff.

Before Toni moved to northern Virginia, she had an "I don't care" attitude about school, but during the last three years of school she "found herself" getting a good education. Compared to the other schools she had attended, her high school in Virginia was "awesome." It was here that she "started to understand things and really begin to learn." Students there were intensely competitive, but Toni states, "I was not involved in that part of the school." She goes on to say,

> I saw the competitiveness because all of my friends were into that, but I just went to school, which I knew was a very good one, and got a good education. I'm thankful for it--very much so. It's definitely prepped me for college.

While Toni is thankful for the type of high school education she received, she feels there was not enough emphasis placed on the individual student's creativity and expression of thoughts and ideas. Specifically, Toni believes that her literature and composition classes were too "technical" and, perhaps more than any other classes, did not provide for individual expression.

> I believe there was just too much attention given to the finer details. God forbid the person being set loose to show what they can do. It was only whether you could punctuate, get the margins right, and do this and that correctly. If you could do these things, then you'd make it. I think it was in essence an attempt to clone students. But what happens to the imagination? What happens to the creativity that makes you you and me me?

In her study of literature Toni feels that too often she was not "allowed" to express her thoughts about what was read. Thinking back on her classes, she recalls the typical situation where students were afraid to oppose the teacher's viewpoint on a selection the class had read:

> I remember when we read The Scarlet Letter. The teacher had her interpretation and explanation of all the underlying meanings. We knew if we opposed them, she would shun us right there for our opinions. And God forbid if we put an opposing view on paper; we would not get a good grade.

Even though she often felt too restricted in her oral and written responses to literature, Toni found the study of literature, especially during her senior year, "pretty interesting." One reason was the literature itself: "I loved Beowulf and the Canterbury Tales and all that stuff"; and a second reason was the teacher with whom Toni had "some type of kindred spirit":

> Even though we weren't allowed to express ourselves like we should have been, I liked what I read and I liked my teacher. Most of the time my relationship with a teacher has a lot to do with how I do in a class. That's not really good, but I'm very individualistic. I know that needs to change, because I need to do well whether I like the teacher or not. But my English teacher and I just seemed to see things in similar ways; I think we were a lot alike.

Toni repeats throughout the data sources that, although she enjoys hearing "all the different out-of-this-world ideas that teachers get from reading literature," she also wants to be free to share her own ideas as well. For Toni, a class discussion of an assigned reading should be a "liberated" session where people share lots of different opinions either orally or in writing:

> A lot of us have thoughts about what we read, but we can't speak them. Sometimes it is easier to write them down. Either way, you've got to be able to open up. The teacher can't tell a student what to think.

Contrasts the Informants Made Between Themselves and Students Who Come From Geographical Areas Other Than Their Own

The purpose of Research Question #2--How do the informants contrast themselves with students who come from geographical areas other than their own?--was to obtain further cultural background data on the informants after they had experienced at least three weeks of their first semester at Belvedere College. Through ethnographic interviews, which began three weeks into the semester; nonparticipant and participant observations; ethnographic records; and site documents, informants related their observations on how they saw themselves as different from other members of the student population at Belvedere.

Findings in this section are presented, first, through a narrative vignette that introduces and supports the assertions and themes related to the informants' interaction with other students during their first weeks of college. The vignette is followed by a realist account of the assertions and themes resulting from analysis of the data set.

Vignette

As the fall semester at Belvedere gets underway, students have fallen into their respective routines. Freshmen no longer get to class ten minutes early, add/drop lines at the registrar's office are gone, and seldom is a solitary figure seen wandering around campus appearing lost or homesick. With class schedules established, dorm assignments finalized, and commuter stickers purchased, the Belvedere campus is back to its normal state once again.

Down in the New Men's Dorm, Daniel and his two roommates, Shane and Ken, are having another argument over Reba McEntire's music. Ken, whom

Daniel and Shane call "the Northerner," hates country music about as much as his two Southern Virginia roommates' chewing habit. The argument leads to verbal exchanges, including "dumb hick," "stuck up yankee," and "tobacco spit." Pillows fly, and a group of dorm residents run laughing to Room 152 to watch another North-South battle while Reba keeps on singing in the background.

At 4:45 Laura drives into the parking lot beside Jenkins Hall where her Monday evening computer class is held. She has managed to schedule a full load of courses and still work full-time at the construction company. Although on a strict schedule with little free time, she is happy that everything has worked out and is glad that she finally has her routine established for the first semester. Looking seriously at college as that important, essential step toward a business career, she tends to assume that other students at Belvedere also have definite goals and takes for granted that they are serious about their work too. As a result, she gets perturbed with the indifferent attitudes some students in her classes possess. As she walks to her building, she sees one of the students in her computer class walking toward the gym. Asking if he is going to class, she is shocked to hear him say, "No, I'm going to the game. I'll catch up later."

Over in the student center, Marshall is playing pool with his friend Chip. He spends a lot of time in this building--eating in the cafeteria, studying in the lounge, and talking with other students. He now eats both lunch and dinner here and is enjoying not having to fix something in his apartment or making excuses not to eat with his grandmother so often. Marshall loves being at Belvedere but especially likes once again being with people his own age and forming lots of new friendships. He feels accepted in this new environment and, in contrast to the past year, is looking less at his past than at the present. Suddenly Chip's big hand grabs his shoulder. "Marshall, here's somebody I want you to meet."

On the second floor of the library Ruth Ann sits alone studying for her first big biology test. She is staying late today so that she can get most of her studying done before going home to a houseful of company. Commuting has worked out well for her; and having her own car allows her to come and go as she pleases. She has met several new friends in her classes, but most of the time she stays to herself and studies. She is enjoying school but feels sometimes a bit conspicuous. Always wearing a dress and her hair hanging below her waist, she knows she is not the typical girl on campus. This, however, is nothing new, so it does not really bother her. But questions about her accent and her precise manner of speaking do. She, too, has observed some different accents among students and teachers, but she would never be so rude as to make comments about them. Deciding that it is time to leave, she walks out of the library and runs into Jane and Cathy, two girls she graduated with. Cathy, she knows, has been elected one of the new cheerleaders, and Jane has a new boyfriend. They politely speak to her, and Ruth Ann asks, "How's it going?" But all three girls keep walking, knowing that their interests and purposes for being in college vary greatly.

On the first floor of the New Men's Dorm, Richard is sitting in his room with his friend Dan waiting for the dinner hour to begin. Allen, his roommate, is in the hall impatiently waiting to use the phone. Although disappointed that he did not get a more mature and less messy roommate, Richard has decided to do the best he can and perhaps make a change before second semester. He tells Dan that it could be worse, and in his usual manner tries to laugh the situation off. College has turned out to be too good an experience to let one person discourage him. He has enjoyed meeting so many people and especially likes the students from Southwest Virginia whom he has met. He finds the dialect here amusing and teases some of his new friends about their accents. Looking out his window, he sees Lynn and Beth, identical twins from Belvedere, walking across the campus. He quickly raises the window and yells a Minnie Pearl "howdy" at them. They laugh and wave, while Richard tells Dan how much he likes to bug those girls about the way they talk. He still wonders how people from this area stand not having more to do for entertainment, but he has never heard any of the natives complain.

Allen comes back into the room grumbling about the poor phone service and flops on his unmade bed. Knowing that Allen avoids the cafeteria as much as possible, Richard and Dan do not bother to ask him to join them and take off to catch up with the Hudson twins.

Toni is in her dorm room getting ready to go to dinner. Her two roommates, Kim and Susan, have a late afternoon class and are supposed to stop by and get her on their way to the cafeteria. Both girls are from the southern part of Virginia, and Toni has found them to be very nice and personable; however, she has found them to have that typical slow-paced approach to things that her father warned her about. While this trait bothers her, the fact that the girls never seem to show their true emotions and constantly agree with everything she says irritates her even more. Even if she purposely changes her opinion during a conversation, she can anticipate the girls to change right along with her. As she meets more people from the Belvedere area, Toni is finding that this kind of fear to be yourself around others and to stand up for your own beliefs seem to be common characteristics.

Even though Toni has "snapped" her roommates off numerous times and answered some of their questions with "It's none of your damn business" just to see what they would do, they still smile at her and apologize for appearing to pry. Toni admits that she can easily intimidate people, but this roommate situation is just not a healthy one. She believes that it is unnatural for people not to be themselves and assert their individuality.

Kim and Susan open the door and ask Toni if she is ready to go. They have brought with them a friend with whom they went to high school. Toni cannot help but wonder if this girl will smile and agree with everything she says too.

Daniel

Daniel has adjusted fairly well to living with two roommates, Shane and Ken. Shane has been no problem at all for Daniel to relate to. They are both from Southwest Virginia and share a love for country music, sports, and tobacco chewing. Ken, however, is the odd one. From Northern Virginia, he appears to Daniel and Shane as just plain strange. He hates their music, detests their chewing and constantly ribs them because they talk "hick." Although Daniel describes their "fussing" as "mainly playing around and aggravating each other," he and Shane do not particularly like Ken always "listening for words [they] don't say proper." Daniel finds that, like all northerners he knows, Ken says what he thinks; but he and Shane are not going to let him tell them what to do or say, especially in their own room. They have told Ken that "before the year is over, he will be listening to [their] music, talking like them, and chewing tobacco."

Daniel has observed some other students like Ken at Belvedere, but most of the people, he is happy to find, seem more like Shane and him.

Laura

Laura commutes to school each day and has successfully combined her work and class schedules. Although she always feels in a hurry to get back to work or back to class, she is happy that the semester is now underway, for she operates best on a strict schedule. She finds that college is not too different from high school and has not observed any real differences among students. She states, "I just see everybody as a student and everybody here as doing the same thing as I am." What has always irked her, though, is students who are not serious about their work; and in her college classes she has already observed this type. As in high school, she has problems tolerating their immaturity and laziness.

Marshall

Also a commuter, Marshall spends a lot of time on campus and is enjoying making new friends. He is glad that school has started, because it is much easier to get acquainted and meet people on campus than back in his grandmother's little town. Just as he did in Maryland, Marshall easily relates to other students and already has a rewarding social life at Belvedere. He realizes how much he has missed being with lots of kids his own age. In his interactions with other students, he is not aware of any concerns on his part as to where they are from or what kind of life they have had. Pertaining to this assertion, Marshall states, "I like being with lots of people. I don't really question how they are different from each other. I guess I was brought up to know you don't really like a person for what they have or where they are from. You like them for who they are."

Ruth Ann

Ruth Ann drives to Belvedere each day, attends classes, and usually stays in the library during her free time. Other than their different accents, she has observed no real differences among the students at the college. She is a little disturbed that some people have made remarks about her "northern accent with a southern twang" and thinks she could never make fun of the way someone talks. She has also observed how quickly the little groups of students who apparently graduated together and came to Belvedere as freshmen have now made new friends and no longer hang out together all of the time. Except for having some classes with them, she rarely sees the two students she graduated with. Unlike her, they more easily get involved in the campus social life and participate in activities that would not be acceptable for her. Commenting on the fact that because of her religious beliefs, she is different from most students, Ruth Ann states, "I am not complaining, but that is the way it is, you know."

Richard

Other than trying to deal with his roommate, Richard is having a great semester. He has concluded that his roommate is "spoiled rotten" and that he will just have to tolerate his bad attitude and whining. Richard tries to focus his attention on his classes and already has become involved in several campus activities. He has made friends, including a number from Southwest Virginia. He admits that it seems strange to him that people from this area do not appear to mind not having much to do for entertainment. He finds that they seem content "just going to football games and stuff like that." He concludes, however, as he has often done before, that "in different environments people are also different." Richard likes to hear people from this area talk and gets a kick out of teasing his friends about their pronunciation and expressions. He states,

> I am used to hearing so many people from different places talk, and I like joking, you know teasing people about the way they say things. It's fun doing that. The way people talk certainly doesn't bother me; I just find it interesting. Not many things do bother me; I mean I'm an easy-going guy.

Different entertainment preferences, dialects, and maturity levels are the only characteristics Richard sees that set him apart from other students at Belvedere.

Toni

Toni has found her two Southern Virginia roommates, Susan and Kim, to be "very sweet and polite"; however, she concludes that, like most people she has met from the Belvedere area, they have a "slow" lifestyle. Concerning this observation, she states, "I swear, people here talk slow, they drive slow, they eat slow, and they use the bathroom slow." She cannot believe the slow pace of life here and states, "It very much gets on my nerves." These people could never, she believes, get by with being so slow in more urban areas.

Toni also finds her roommates rather insecure about expressing their opinions. Toni acknowledges, though, that she is different from these two girls and sometimes probably hurts their feelings and appears rude because she can be "short and sharp" with people. Her philosophy on being a roommate is that she is going to be herself; and she will not change to suit someone else. On the other hand, she does not expect her roommates to change for her; each girl should be herself, and each must learn to deal with the others.

Toni sees herself as much more secure than the majority of students she has met at Belvedere. She also believes that she is a stronger person than most. Toni finds that more often than not when she begins conversations with her roommates, they seem afraid to take issue with her. She relates,

> When I express my view on something, they will agree with me; and then I will kind of turn my opinion around and say something else. Then they will agree with that! I'm sitting there thinking, "Where are you coming from? Don't you believe anything that you know?" I don't like to see people not sticking to their own beliefs.

Toni wants people to be themselves around her, and she finds it disturbing that so many people at Belvedere seem to be afraid of doing that. She emphasizes that most of the students are "very, very nice," but they seem afraid to disagree with someone else's opinions. She adds, "It bothers me to see people with no backbone. Oh, I know I can intimidate people, but I've just found that people from this area, the way I see them, just don't have much as far as standing up for something."

The Cultural Scenes Depicted in the Stories

This section of the chapter focuses on the cultural scenes depicted in the six Appalachian short stories. In this section I will use one selection, "The Return," to illustrate how I wrote summary overviews of all the stories. I constructed the overviews of the cultural scenes through (1) complete domain analyses of the stories, (2) a structural format determined by organizing domains, and (3) the realist mode of ethnographic writing. Appendix E contains the domain lists for each of the five additional stories, followed by the summary overviews of the five stories in Appendix F.

As discussed in Chapter III, the purpose of the summary overview is to present a holistic view of the cultural scene of each story the informants read. Moreover, the overviews provide for the study's audience a necessary knowledge of the fictional cultural scenes to which the informants responded.

The Organizing Domain for "The Return" and a Complete Domain List for This Story

Organizing Domain: X is a Stage in Y
(X is a stage in Wave's visit to his grandparents)

Domain List:

Characteristics of Wave
Characteristics of Grandfather
Characteristics of Mamaw

Characteristics of Daddy
Characteristics of Mamaw Little
Characteristics of the Lord
Characteristics of Girlfriend
Characteristics of Cornbread

Kinds of furniture
Kinds of love
Kinds of feelings
Kinds of food
Kinds of roads
Kinds of gestures
Kinds of expressions

Results of sickness
Results of watching wrestling on TV
Results of having to take care of Mamaw Little

Places to Sit
Places to eat
Places to watch TV
Places to walk
Places to scrub

Parts of a farm
Parts of a house
Parts of a kitchen
Parts of a den
Parts of Mamaw's room

Kinds of items on a bedside table

Reasons for living
Reasons for grinning
Reasons for agitating
Reasons for rapping foot
Reasons for laughing
Reasons for turning TV up
Reasons for Mamaw hollerin'
Reasons for Grandma arguing with her sister
Reasons for Wave closing his eyes
Reasons for Wave running
Reasons for Wave imagining he is a mole

Stages in Wave's visit

Ways to drive
Ways to eat
Ways to agitate Mamaw
Ways to deal with Mamaw

Summary Overview of "The Return"

Wave is driving in from college to visit his grandparents. As he listens to an oldies station on the radio, he sings and bounces up and down. He feels a strong anxious sort of excitement much like he did as a child when he got to sleep with his grandfather. Veering off the highway onto Route 32, he passes a mobile home where a girl he almost married lives. He always felt she would die from a strange disease--and still does.

As he turns the car onto the gravel road to Mabry Flat, he sees his grandparents' farm. Bringing the car to a stop in front of the house, he walks the narrow, grassless patch to the back door and steps in the den without knocking. Wave sees his grandfather sitting in a recliner, eating cornbread with milk, and watching wrestling on television. Wave says, "Ho! Rooster!" His grandfather responds with "Wheeeeel. Ho! Pullet!" Wave talks to his grandfather and asks if there is any cornbread left. Going to the kitchen to get some cornbread, he sees his grandmother talking on the phone. He waves at her and says, "Howdy, Marthee!" She frowns and waves back with a wave that is more like a "shoo" or a swat at a fly. Wave is not able to resist agitating his grandmother, so he rattles jars and a glass casserole top in the refrigerator. His grandmother tells Versie on the phone that "this youngin' is aransackin' and agomin' somethin' awful"and complains about not ever being able to keep the house clean.

Back in the den, Wave eats his cornbread and milk and watches his grandfather's head dodge back and forth with the blows of the wrestlers on TV. He thinks that this is the one bit of foolishness his grandfather allows himself. When his grandmother comes in the room, she tells Wave that nobody can fix cornbread like her and says that she "cain't hardly go" because she is so tired. Her husband tells her to rest, but she tells him to hush. After she goes back to the kitchen, Wave's grandfather tells him that she is like a pet crow--"either eatin' or crappin' or talkin' about it." She comes back in and asks her husband if he is finished "aslurpin' and asloppin'." After she takes his bowl into the kitchen, they hear her complaining to herself that her husband does not do a thing but "chew tobaccer and spit." When Wave asks his grandfather how he puts up with her talk, he says he just turns up the TV.

Wave takes his bowl into the kitchen and asks his grandmother about Mamaw Little. She tells him that Mamaw "ain't adoin' no good and is aworrin' her to death." His grandmother's sister, Faye, calls; and as their conversation begins, Wave hears Mamaw in her room talking to the Lord. His grandmother starts complaining to Faye about MaMaw's hollering and Faye's not helping her take care of their mother. Wave walks back to Mamaw's room and first notices her potty-chair surrounded by newspapers. Mamaw is in a recliner with her bottles of pills and jars of ointments and lotions close by on a small stand. A large-print Bible and magnifying glass are there too. Wave says howdy to her, and she quickly smooths her dress and tucks it under her legs. As he gives her his hand, she tells him she is in awful shape, paralyzed from "asetting'" in the recliner. Wave tells her she is doing good and that he is surprised she is not out hunting a man. Her response is that when she sees Bob up in heaven, she will be the same as he left her. She tells Wave that she wants to go to heaven and that he must feel the same way. She describes his daddy as a man of God and reminds Wave that God will forgive his sins. Wave nods and says, "Yeah." Mamaw tells him to tell his grandmother than she needs to get on the pot, so he tells her goodbye and leaves the room.

Receiving the message, Wave's grandmother replies, "She's akillin' me." Wave hears the sounds of wrestling, his grandmother talking, and Mamaw saying, "Jesus, help me move my bowels." He closes his eyes and pictures her in his mind; and hearing her bowels moving in the plastic bucket, he smiles and his eyes begin watering. He feels a deep, dizzying love for this place and laughs a little hysterical laugh. He tells his grandfather that he is going to walk around for awhile and closes the door behind him. He begins running through the yard toward the hayfield, catching handfuls of flowers as he goes. Falling on the grass and breathing heavily, he presses his head to the cool ground. He closes his eyes and imagines he is a clawless mole worming his way under the sod.

The Cultural Scenes The Informants Identified in the Stories

The third week of their first semester at Belvedere, the informants began reading and discussing the first of the Appalachian short stories I had selected. Beginning with "The Return," I introduced a new story every other week throughout the remainder of the semester.

The purpose of this section of the research findings is to report the cultural scenes that the informants identified in each of the six selections. Applying the same method used for Research Question #3, I wrote the overviews of the cultural scenes by using (1) domain analyses of the written and oral responses recorded during the word-count and subsequent readings of each story during a two-week period, (2) a structural format determined by organizing domains, and (3) the realist mode of ethnographic writing. As in the preceding section of the chapter, I will use "The Return" as an illustration and will include the overviews of the cultural scenes the informants identified in this selection. Appendix G contains the overviews of the cultural scenes the informants identified in the other five stories. Table 4, at the end of this section of the chapter, is a graphic display of the domains from each story that the informants identified in their responses and through which I constructed the overviews.

Cultural Scenes Identified by Each Informant in "The Return"

1. Daniel

Wave has come from college to visit his grandparents on their farm. He sees his grandfather and he goes to get something to eat. While in the kitchen, he makes a lot of noise to bother his grandmother. Then he and his grandfather watch wrestling. Wave's grandmother comes in and asks him about the cornbread he is eating. His grandmother and grandfather start an argument; and when his grandmother goes out of the room, he and his grandfather laugh about it. Wave takes his empty bowl into the kitchen and asks his grandmother how his great-grandmother is doing. She tells him that she is in real bad shape. Wave then goes in and talks with his great-grandmother. She tells him about going to heaven and being ready to die. Wave goes and gets his grandmother to come and help Mamaw. When he hears that everything is all right, he goes outside to run through the country.

2. Laura

A young, upbeat college student is driving in from college to visit his grandparents. He passes the house where a girl he almost married lives. The young man is enjoying spending time with his grandparents. Even though he has to deal with his grandfather's love for pro-wrestling and his grandmother's constant bickering, he tries to make the best of it. Wave enjoys eating cornbread and agitating his grandmother while she is on the phone. Then he goes in to visit his great-grandmother who is sick and seems to be a burden on his grandmother who is practically unable to take care of her. After Wave talks to her, he feels a love for his home and a great sense of freedom, knowing home is where he belongs.

3. Marshall

Wave is going to visit his grandparents at their farm. When he arrives, he finds his grandfather in the den watching TV and eating cornbread. His grandmother is talking on the phone. Wave gets some cornbread and joins his grandfather in the den and watches wrestling. Wave's grandmother comes in the den complaining and looking for sympathy. Wave asks her about Mamaw Little and then goes to her back bedroom to visit with her. After staying with her awhile, he goes outside and runs through the tall grass and drops on the ground, imagining himself to be a clawless mole trying to worm his way under the sod.

4. Ruth Ann

A young man drives home for a visit with his grandparents. He is reckless and ornery. After passing an old girlfriend's house, he gets to his grandparents house. His grandfather is eating cornbread and milk, and his grandmother is on the phone. While Wave and his grandfather are watching wrestling, his grandmother comes in and fusses over both of them for a few minutes. Wave thinks of a 60's tune and starts tapping his feet. His grandfather thinks he is crazy. Wave then goes to one of the bedrooms where his great-grandmother is. She is deaf and paralyzed in her legs. She tells him that she is not doing any good. She moans to the Lord. She says she wants to go to heaven, but she does not want to die to get there. She tells Wave to turn to Jesus and then sends him to get her daughter because she has to use the bathroom. Wave gets her and stands in the doorway and watches wrestling while listening to what is going on in the bedroom. He is overcome with a love for the place and goes for a walk.

5. Richard

Wave is coming from college back to his grandparents' home while jamming to the radio. He drums his hands on the dash and then comes to the familiar interstate. He passes an old girlfriend's house and looks around for people he might know. He arrives at his grandparent's home and says hi to his grandpop.

He gets cornbread and makes a lot of noise in the kitchen to distract his grandmother. Wave and his grandfather watch wrestling together. His grandmother comes in and starts chattering with him. They talk about food and how he is doing. Then his grandparents start arguing and bickering. His grandmother goes to the kitchen where they hear her talking to herself. Then Wave and his grandfather talk about her. His grandmother answers the phone, and Wave goes to see his Mamaw Little in a back room. She chats to him and God about her sufferings and pains. Wave tries to comfort her. After finishing his conversation with her, he tells his grandmother that Mamaw has to use the potty. He listens to both the TV and Mamaw. He then goes outside with a feeling of neat things and runs through the fields.

6. Toni

Wave has gone to his grandparents' from college. He greets his grandfather and grandmother and finally ends up eating cereal with his grandfather while the old man watches TV. His grandmother talks on the phone and gripes. Wave and his grandfather talk about wrestling and Grandma. She comes in and asks Wave how his cereal is and then goes on fussing and talking to herself. Wave can't see how his grandfather puts up with Grandma. His grandfather tells him that she goes on like this all the time. She is just like a pet crow, either eatin' or crappin' or talkin' about it. He tells Wave that he just ignores her most of the time. Wave and his grandfather talk a bit more, and then Grandma answers the phone and begins talking about her mother. He hears from the conversation how bad off she is and goes back to see her and say hi. He hears her comments on the Lord and sees that she wouldn't mind going to heaven just as long as she doesn't have to die to get there. Wave realizes his love for his grandparents' home and goes outside to run and get all of his energy out. He imagines as he lies in the grass that he is a mole.

Table 4: Domains From Each Story That The Informants Identified in Their Responses

1. "The Return"

Domains

	Daniel	Laura	Marshall	Ruth Ann	Richard	Toni
Characteristics of Wave	X	X	X	X	X	X
Characteristics of Grandfather	X	X		X	X	X
Characteristics of Mamaw	X	X		X	X	X
Characteristics of Daddy						
Characteristics of Mamaw Little	X	X	X	X	X	X
Characteristics of the Lord				X		X
Characteristics of cornbread	X	X	X	X	X	
Characteristics of girlfriend	X	X		X	X	X
Kinds of furniture						
Kinds of love				X		X
Kinds of feelings		X		X	X	
Kinds of food	X					
Kinds of roads						
Kinds of gestures						
Kinds of expressions						
Kinds of items on a bedside table						
Reasons for living						
Reasons for grinning						
Reasons for agitating	X	X				
Reasons for laughing	X					
Reasons for tapping foot					X	
Reasons for turning TV up						
Reasons for Mamaw hollerin'				X	X	
Reasons for Grandma arguing with her sister						
Reasons for Wave closing his eyes						
Reasons for Wave running	X		X	X	X	X
Reasons for Wave imagining he is a mole		X	X			X

Table 4 (continued)

	Daniel	Laura	Marshall	Ruth Ann	Richard	Toni
Results of sickness				X		
Results of watching wrestling on TV	X		X	X	X	X
Results of having to take care of Mamaw Little		X	X		X	
Places to sit						
Places to eat	X					
Places to watch TV						
Places to walk						
Places to scrub						
Parts of a farm			X			
Parts of a house			X	X		
Parts of a kitchen						
Parts of a den						
Parts of Mamaw's room						
Stages in Wave's visit	X		X	X	X	X
Ways to drive				X	X	
Ways to eat						
Ways to agitate Mamaw	X					X
Ways to deal with Mamaw						X
2. "Heat Lightning"						
Domains						
Characteristics of Geneva	X	X	X	X	X	X
Characteristics of Geneva's hair						
Characteristics of Tammy	X	X	X	X	X	X
Characteristics of Wesley	X		X			
Characteristics of Wesley Junior	X	X	X	X	X	X
Characteristics of the holler			X			
Characteristics of Lois Ann				X		X

Table 4 (continued)

	Daniel	Laura	Marshall	Ruth Ann	Richard	Toni
Characteristics of Mamaw						
Characteristics of oil cloth						
Characteristics of Mamaw's house					X	
Characteristics of heat lightning						
Characteristics of Anita						
Characteristics of Anita's clothes						X
Characteristics of carnival music						
Characteristics of carnival people						
Characteristics of the bottom						
Characteristics of the carnival man	X					
Characteristics of the mess of trailers						
Characteristics of the airstream trailer						
Kinds of beans						
Kinds of weather	X		X	X	X	X
Kinds of roads			X			
Kinds of houses			X			
Kinds of things to be scared of						
Kinds of lightning						X
Kinds of clothes		X		X		X
Kinds of carnival rides						
Kinds of food			X			
Kinds of money	X					X
Reasons for sitting on the porch			X	X	X	
Reasons for Geneva feeling a change coming on	X	X				
Reasons for Geneva hollering out in church			X	X	X	
Reasons for Tammy putting hymn book over her face						
Reasons for Wesley Junior beating his head against the wall						
Reasons for Tammy getting wound up and crying						
Reasons for going over to Mamaw's	X			X	X	X
Reasons for getting worn out listening						
Reasons for Mamaw being mad	X					
Reasons for Mamaw being scared	X			X		X

Table 4 (continued)

	Daniel	Laura	Marshall	Ruth Ann	Richard	Toni
Reasons for Mamaw turning black as a cinder						
Reasons for bottom changing						
Reasons for Geneva not caring						
Reasons for Geneva squeaking loud						
Reasons for Lois Ann screaming						X
Reasons for Geneva throwing back her head and laughing						
Reasons for Geneva feeling good				X		
Results of hot weather						
Results of hollering out in church						
Results of Geneva telling kids they were not going to carnival	X				X	X
Results of Wesley hitting pickup						
Results of Geneva listening						
Results of rain and thunder		X	X			
Results of getting struck by lightning						
Results of seeing Geneva in shorts						
Results of carnival setting up in the bottom						
Results of Lois Ann having to go to the bathroom			X		X	X
Results of going to bushes			X			X
Results of Lois Ann screaming						
Results of man asking Geneva into the trailer		X	X	X	X	X
Places in the holler						
Places in the carnival		X	X			
Parts of the mountain across the road						
Parts of Geneva's life						
Parts of Mamaw's house						
Parts of the carnival			X			
Stages in Geneva's day	X	X	X	X	X	X

Table 4 (continued)

	Daniel	Laura	Marshall	Ruth Ann	Richard	Toni
Ways to walk						
Ways to answer Tammy						
Ways to know there is a change coming on	X		X	X		
Ways to take care of Mamaw						
Ways to get away from the carnival man		X				X
Ways to live in a carnival						

3. "Night Ride"

Domains

	Daniel	Laura	Marshall	Ruth Ann	Richard	Toni
Characteristics of Delmer	X	X	X	X	X	X
Characteristics of Wilgus	X	X	X	X	X	X
Characteristics of Grandmother						X
Characteristics of Pauline		X	X			X
Characteristics of Pauline's house	X	X		X		X
Characteristics of the homeplace		X		X		
Characteristics of Glen		X	X	X		
Characteristics of Glen's letters						
Characteristics of slag heaps	X	X	X	X		
Characteristics of the Nashville radio station						
Kinds of houses					X	
Kinds of guns		X	X		X	
Kinds of cars						
Kinds of roads						
Kinds of beer				X	X	
Kinds of junk						
Kinds of rubbers						
Kinds of trees						
Kinds of keys						
Kinds of gestures			X	X		

Table 4 (continued)

	Daniel	Laura	Marshall	Ruth Ann	Richard	Toni
Kinds of nights		X				
Kinds of letters						
Kinds of music						
Kinds of buddies						
Reasons for stopping at Vernon's house				X	X	
Resons for Wilgus's stomach rising up toward his heart			X			
Reasons for being thrilled			X			
Resons for Wilgus driving		X	X	X	X	
Reasons for shooting					X	
Reasons for passing on a curve						
Reasons for seeing a man about a dog						
Reasons for pulling shade down						
Reasons for cursing			X			
Reasons for celebrating the night						
Reasons for sweet thrills running up Wilgus' back						
Reasons for keeping letters						
Reasons for grandmother lying awake						
Results of blowing horn						
Results of driving fast	X		X	X		
Results of parents dying						
Results of thoughts about messing around						
Results of shooting pistol						
Results of coming come						
Results of being smart						
Results of listening to music						
Results of Delmer passing out	X	X	X	X	X	X
Places to keep pistol						
Places to keep rubbers		X				
Places to keep junk						
Places to get beer						
Places to play basketball						

Table 4 (continued)

	Daniel	Laura	Marshall	Ruth Ann	Richard	Toni
Places to cruise						
Places to take a piss-break	X		X	X	X	X
Places to dump slag					X	
Places to burn slag						
Places to sit down and talk	X	X	X	X	X	X
Places to sit and think						
Places to shoot	X		X	X	X	X
Places to drink beer	X					X
Places to dig coal						
Parts of a house						
Parts of a car						
Stages in Wilgus' ride with Delmer	X	X	X	X	X	X
Reasons for stopping at Vernon's house				X	X	
Resons for Wilgus's stomach rising up toward his heart			X			
Reasons for being thrilled			X			
Resons for Wilgus driving		X	X	X	X	
Reasons for shooting					X	
Reasons for passing on a curve						
Reasons for seeing a man about a dog						
Ways to drive	X	X	X	X	X	X
Ways to express feelings					X	
Ways to fire a gun					X	
Ways to work in a garden						
Ways to pass a car				X	X	
Ways to celebrate the night						
Ways to wait on Delmer			X	X		X
Ways to describe life				X		

Table 4 (continued)

	Daniel	Laura	Marshall	Ruth Ann	Richard	Toni
Places in Finley County						
Places in Letcher County						
Places in Kentucky						
4. "The Proffitts in Chicago":						
Domains						
Characteristics of Zollie	X	X	X			X
Characteristics of the Critchers				X		X
Characteristics of Dorman	X	X	X	X	X	X
Characteristics of Dorman's farm			X	X		
Characteristics of the hills					X	
Characteristics of Marvella	X	X	X	X	X	X
Characteristics of Marvella's mother		X				
Characteristics of the car			X			
Characteristics of Chicago		X	X		X	X
Characteristics of Goose Elk						
Characteristics of Juanita	X					
Characteristics of Juanita's apartment	X		X	X	X	
Characteristics of Juanita's meal						
Characteristics of Juanita's job						
Characteristics of the alley		X				X
Characteristics of the sky						X
Characteristics of Marvella's description of the alley		X	X			X
Characteristics of the little kids	X	X	X	X	X	X
Kinds of earth						
Kinds of mud						
Kinds of lungs						
Kinds of laughter						
Kinds of chatter						
Kinds of eyes						
Kinds of hills		X				

Table 4 (continued)

	Daniel	Laura	Marshall	Ruth Ann	Richard	Toni
Kinds of roads						
Kinds of houses						
Kinds of birds						
Kinds of trees						
Kinds of food						
Kinds of apartments		X	X			
Kinds of jobs			X			
Kinds of flowers						
Reasons for kids loving Zollie						
Reasons for Pa questioning the move						X
Reasons for Pa beating sty railing						
Reasons for Pa's face looking too old						
Reasons for Pa not seeing what is best for family						
Reasons for not leavning the hills	X					
Reasons for going to Chicago	X	X	X	X	X	
Reasons for Zollie singing						
Reasons for Marvella's embarrassment						
Reasons for Marvella creating a picture for Pa	X	X		X	X	
Reasons for Pa taking a nap						
Results of last hog dying			X	X	X	X
Results of strife between Marvella and Pa		X				
Results of poisoning and blight						
Results of mountain air						
Results of urging kids to take final look at mountains						
Results seeing girls' nakedness on TV						
Results of having to stay in Chicago	X		X			
Results of Marvella's picture				X	X	X
Results of a long trip						
Results of telling kids about flowers and trees						

Table 4 (continued)

	Daniel	Laura	Marshall	Ruth Ann	Richard	Toni
Places to get a job						
Places to put garbage						
Places to park car						
Places to sleep						
Places to wash						
Places to make money						
Places to keep hogs						
Places to migrate						
Places to have an inside toilet						
Places to have a TV						
Places to play catch-ball						
Parts of tar-paper house						
Parts of Chicago						
Parts of Great Smokies						
Parts of apartment						
Parts of alley				X		X
Parts of Marvella's description of the alley	X			X		X
Stages in the Proffitt's move	X	X	X	X		X
Ways to sit in a car					X	
Places in Goose Elk						
Places in Chicago						

Table 4 (continued)

	Daniel	Laura	Marshall	Ruth Ann	Richard	Toni
5. "First Day of Winter"						
Domains						
Characteristics of Hollis	X	X	X	X	X	X
Characteristics of the farm				X		
Characteristics of mother	X	X	X	X	X	X
Characteristics of father	X	X	X	X	X	X
Characteristics of Jake		X	X		X	X
Characteristics of the parsonage						
Characteristics of the family						
Characteristics of the kitchen						
Characteristics of the car	X		X	X		X
Characteristics of the land						
Characteristics of Hollis' hands						
Characteristics of the state home	X					
Characteristics of the house						
Characteristics of the meal						
Characteristics of Jake's letter						
Characteristics of Jake's pictures						
Characteristics of squirrel liver						
Characteristics of mother's singing						
Characteristics of father's breathing						
Characteristics of the living room						
Characteristics of the sun						
Kinds of food	X			X		X
Kinds of weather						X
Kinds of animals	X		X	X	X	X
Kinds of animals						
Kinds of music						

Table 4 (continued)

	Daniel	Laura	Marshall	Ruth Ann	Richard	Toni
Reasons for sitting by the window all night						X
Reasons for askin Jake to take parents	X	X				X
Reasons for going hunting	X		X	X	X	X
Reasons for car not starting	X		X	X	X	
Reasons for Hollis being stuck			X	X		X
Reasons for Hollis not making his own way		X			X	
Reasons for Hollis not being happier		X				
Reasons for Hollis thinking of Jake	X					X
Reasons for Hollis thinking of state home	X					
Reasons for laughing					X	
Reasons for father crying	X		X	X		X
Reasons for father asking Hollis, "How could you do such such a goddamned thing as that?"			X			
Results of Jake building a tomb for Hollis		X		X		X
Results of blood being too thick in mother's veins						X
Results of farm failing				X		
Results of talking to Jake					X	X
Results of mother not bathing				X		
Results of car sitting too long						
Results of scraping knuckles on hood of car						X
Results of insanity						
Results of Jack not taking parents in						X
Results of thinking of Jake						
Results of thinking of what Jake said about the state home						
Results of Jake's letter					X	X
Results of Hollis telling parents he asked Jake to take them in			X	X		X
Places to sit						
Places to get money						
Places to go hunting						
Places to take parents			X		X	

Table 4 (continued)

	Daniel	Laura	Marshall	Ruth Ann	Richard	Toni
Parts of the day		X				
Parts of the farm						
Parts of the house						
Parts of the car						
Parts of a squirrel						
Parts of a fox						
Stages in Hollis' day after talking with Jake	X		X	X	X	X
Ways to take care of parents	X			X		
Ways to replace car engine						
Ways to walk						
Ways to hunt	X					
Ways to hide blood on hands					X	X
Ways to rest	X			X		X
Ways to treat folks in a state home	X					
Ways to be calmed						
Placed In Harper's Ferry						
6. "Offerings"						
Domains						
Characteristics of Grandmother	X	X	X	X	X	X
Characteristics of Mamma	X	X	X	X	X	X
Characteristics of Sandra	X	X	X	X	X	X
Characteristics of Jerry	X	X	X	X	X	X
Characteristics of a bird						X
Characteristics of the living room						
Characteristics of Joe						X
Characteristics of Grandfather				X		X
Characteristics of the kitchen						
Characteristics of ducks	X					

Table 4 (continued)

	Daniel	Laura	Marshall	Ruth Ann	Richard	Toni
Characteristics of the meal	X			X	X	X
Characteristics of the past	X			X		X
Characteristics of That's Entertainment						X
Characteristics of the night	X			X		X
Kinds of illnesses			X	X		X
Kinds of duck expressions						X
Kinds of desserts						
Kinds of trees						
Kinds of sounds						
Kinds of offerings					X	X
Kinds of lies						
Kinds of flowers						
Kinds of insects		X				X
Reasons for coming to the barn						
Reasons for calling dog to the house						
Reasons for pressing Grandmother to talk about the past				X	X	
Reasons for cutting trees						X
Reasons for operations						
Reasons for bird dying						
Reasons for noticing cobwebs						X
Reasons for not moving						
Reasons for delaying supper						
Results of childbed fever			X			X
Results of Mama and Grandmother coming to vist	X	X	X	X	X	X
Places to grow vegetables					X	X
Places to live						
Places to admire the view						
Places to eat						
Places to throw cigarette	X			X		X
Places to find ducks		X	X	X		X

Table 4 (continued)

	Daniel	Laura	Marshall	Ruth Ann	Richard	Toni
Parts of a house						
Parts of the past						
Parts of the supper						
Ways to see things						
Ways to make tomato sauce				X		
Stages in the visit from Sandra's mother and grandmother	X	X	X	X	X	X

How the Informants Responded to the Cultural Scenes They Identified in the Stories

The focus of this section of the findings is the informants' responses to the cultural scenes they identified in the six stories. I analyzed the informants' oral and written responses, the participant observations, the interviews, and ethnographic records to determine themes and assertions pertaining to the nature of the informants' responses.

This section is organized in the following manner. First, a narrative vignette on the informants' readings of "The Return" provides an illustration of the construct, "response to the cultural scene." Following the vignette are realist accounts of the themes and assertions discovered through ethnographic analysis of the informants' responses to each story. In both the vignette and the realist accounts, I emphasized both the responses that were repeated throughout the data sources and any responses that notably changed during the course of the informants' work with the selections. For further illustration and support, Appendix H lists the domains of the responses each informant had to the cultural scene he or she identified in each story. The domains take the form of "statements made about the cultural scene."

Vignette

It is 9:00 on the morning of September 12, and Daniel in his John Deere cap is sitting in the back row in Room 109 waiting for English class to begin. Today, he remembers, Mr. Baker is bringing to class the first of the stories he explained they would be reading during the semester. As his teacher enters the room, Daniel cannot help but wonder what kind of story it will be. As he sees the copies of the story being passed toward him, Daniel does not think the story looks very long, so that is one good thing. He receives the final copy in the stack for his row and sees the title "The Return." He remembers the instructions given last time and sees his teacher write on the board the three questions the class is to answer for each section of the story. Given the cue to begin, Daniel starts reading. He immediately detects that Wave Mabry is very much like him; and as the story continues, Daniel cannot believe how much what he is reading is like his own life. It is, he will go on to say long after his first reading of the story, almost exactly like what he experiences every time he goes home.

Two other informants are in Daniel's class. Sitting further up toward the middle of the classroom, Toni, in a bright yellow sweater, receives her copy of the story. She reads each section and finds it easy to respond to the questions on the board. However, she finds the story about a college student coming home to his family rather boring. To her, nothing exciting really happens. She does not relate to what she finds in "The Return" but does find the ending peaceful and kind of nice.

Across from Toni in the row against the outside wall of the room, Ruth Ann sits reading, as the sun shining through the big windows highlights her blond hair. As she reads, she keeps hoping this story will improve. She thinks Wave is silly and does not care for him. Also, the scene where Mamaw Little has to go the bathroom bothers her, and she questions why it is in the story. When Ruth Ann gets to the ending, she feels let down.

In the same classroom it is now 1:00. Laura, Marshall, and Richard see their English teacher enter the room carrying copies of the story they know they are to read today. Laura, who does not put reading in her list of fun activities, hopes the story is a good one. Sitting on the front row, she takes a copy of the story from the stack the teacher gives her and hands the rest to the student behind. Laura and the teacher hear him sarcastically whisper, "Thanks a lot." She pretends not to hear but is surprised to hear Mr. Baker laugh and say, "Oh, it's not that bad, is it?" As she begins reading the story, Laura gets a kick out of the grandparents and relates to Wave's excitement about going home. For her, the story is enjoyable, and she definitely identifies with the grandparent-grandchild relationship.

In the back of the room, Marshall is curious as to what this story is about and upon getting his copy, wonders what the title refers to. Reading the story, he finds a rather insignificant incident involving a college student visiting his grandparents. He wonders why his teacher is having the class read this story and thinks to himself, "I guess we'll find out soon."

Looking cool and comfortable in his white tennis shorts and dark blue shirt, Richard relaxes with his copy of the story and during the reading finds that it brings to him memories of his grandparents and their home. He particularly pays attention to the references to religion in the story because right now he is so much into that. As he finishes the story, he thinks that, like Wave, he would have also gotten out of that house to get away from the noise and mess.

Realist Accounts of the Informants' Responses

1. "The Return"

Daniel finds in "The Return" "a picture of [his] own life." He cannot believe how much Wave and his grandparents are like him and his own grandmother and grandfather. Because of these similarities and because he can relate so strongly to the cultural scene he finds, Daniel really likes the story.

Laura also enjoys reading ″The Return″ and can relate to Wave′s feelings and the depiction of the grandparents. She finds the grandparents and their lifestyle ″typical″ and feels that the scene where a person goes back home to be with loved ones ″relates to virtually everyone.″

In contrast to Daniel and Laura, Marshall does not find ″The Return″ to have ″much significance.″ He sees Wave as a ″normal″ college student and his visit to his grandparents as simply a ″normal occurrence.″ Although he can ″picture the farm″ and ″relate to Wave′s feelings,″ Marshall remains indifferent about the story.

Ruth Ann′s response is more negative. She feels that Wave is silly and immature. To her it is ″ridiculous″ for him to be ″so giddy″ about being at his grandparents′. She does not like Wave nor does she think his listening to Mamaw Little using the bathroom appropriate. Ruth Ann sees that in the story ″Wave realizes how much he cares for his relatives,″ but she does not care for the way he acts.

Richard especially takes note of Wave and Mamaw Little′s conversation about religion in the latter part of the story. ″The Return″ also causes him to think of his own grandparents, but memories of both good and bad characteristics of old people come to his mind. Specifically, Mamaw Little′s comments on dying bother him because, he explains, ″I hate to see old people just do nothing but talk about dying.″

Reading "The Return" bores Toni. She cannot relate to Wave going to see his grandparents and finds nothing "exciting" in the story. Although she feels nothing really happens, she finds the ending gives her a "peaceful" feeling.

2. "Heat Lightning"

Although he knows what heat lightning is, Daniel does not understand what it has to do with what happens to Geneva. So different from the first story he read, "Heat Lightning" continues to leave him bewildered throughout re-readings and discussions. He tells the other three members of his discussion group, "I don't see the purpose of the storm, and I don't understand the part about Geneva feeling like she is changing. I kind of liked the carnival scene and when Geneva and the kids come home, but I don't see how any of this relates to what happens at the beginning."

In "Heat Lightning" Laura finds a woman who "wants so much more out of life; but, after thinking about the love she has for her family and lifestyle, she remains content with the way things are." Laura "appreciates" Geneva, because, although the character wants a change and enjoys "a day in the wild life," she "faces reality" and returns to accept the responsibilities of her family and home.

Reading the story, Marshall enjoys the "clear picture" he gets of a poverty-stricken family and thinks they are probably a lot like his idea of coal-camp people. However, because he does not see the purpose of the storm and references to lightning, he finds what happens in the story "pretty dull." Moreover, while he likes "the way Geneva sets her work aside and takes the kids to the carnival," Marshall sees her efforts to change her life as futile and sad.

Ruth Ann is "shocked" at what Geneva does. At first she finds her to be a young woman who is tired of her monotonous life. "Geneva," she explains, "is in a daze; but when she snaps out of it, she really snaps out." Ruth Ann sees that Geneva's lifestyle finally gets the best of her, and, as a result, she goes "off the deep end." She disapproves of Geneva's wasting her husband's money and finds it disturbing that she would actually consider running off with the carnival man. She states, "I could just imagine what Geneva's little boy would feel like when he got off of the ride and Mommy wasn't there." Ruth Ann is surprised that Geneva so suddenly does the opposite of everything she has done before. However, re-readings of the story cause her to see that "Geneva was really in a rut." She adds, "If anyone needed a little excitement, this woman does."

Until the discussion of the story, Richard thinks Geneva and her family are black. "White people," he believes, "do not normally 'holler out' in church." He decides that Geneva is "kind of neat" because, although she is poor and her kids are "spoiled brats," she and her family try to do what is right and go to church. He thinks the carnival scene is "pretty sick," and until the discussion of the story, continues to question what heat lightning is.

Toni does not remember ever hearing someone talk about lightning like Geneva's mother-in-law does. "Mamaw's fear of lightning," she thinks, "is peculiar." Also, she finds Geneva and the kids coming home to Wesley after the carnival "so boring." She would like to see Geneva do something else to break out of her rut. On the other hand, Toni enjoys Geneva because, like her, she is "spontaneous and impulsive." She explains, "I hate for life to be routine and hum-drum. I could relate to Geneva. She has a wild streak. I don't feel like she regretted going to the carnival and all that happened; she'll probably do something like that again if the opportunity arises."

3. "Night Ride"

Daniel thoroughly enjoys "Night Ride." The story for him is "a real life thing," containing events similar to what he and his friends have done. "This kind of thing," he notes, "takes place quite often where I live. I have gone out at night like this with some of my friends to take a break and have a good time. I could relate to what happens here, and that made it so much more enjoyable."

Laura also likes the story. She likes "the funny stuff in it," especially Delmer's "exclamatory voice and vulgar expressions." She admits that she "laughed out loud at the part about the rubbers." Laura believes that she relates to the story because "it's about something many teens do." Seeing the importance of Wilgus and Delmer "reflecting on memories of Glen," Laura thinks "it is sweet that even though they are drunk, the two sit and talk seriously."

Marshall loves the story and states, "I could almost feel intoxicated along with Wilgus." Throughout the story he is "on edge," wondering what will happen next. He enjoys Delmer who, for him, "represents the hillbilly type, who enjoys having a good time and is without a care in the world."

In contrast to Daniel, Laura, and Marshall, Ruth Ann dislikes "Night Ride." The drinking in the story bothers her: "I just want," she states, "to shake Wilgus and tell him how stupid it is to drink." She notes that the story "hits closer to home than she would like to admit, because some of [her] relatives don't have any remorse about drinking." Also, she finds it sad that Delmer is "so inconsiderate to his parents" and that "he seems content to hide his problems in a can of beer."

Overall, Ruth Ann finds in this story "nothing but two people getting drunk and flying down the highway." Such actions, she feels, along with the burning slate dump, remind her of a "West Virginia scene." She "was not impressed or entertained" by "Night Ride."

As Richard begins reading the story for the first time, he thinks that "the joy riding scene [is] funny"; however, when Delmer and Wilgus start to drink, he feels "uneasy and [does] not like Wilgus being taken out by an adult who should know better." Delmer's shooting a gun and using foul language also disturb him. He explains, "I disapprove of things like this, because they go against everything I believe in." He views Delmer and Wilgus as "hillbillies, moving from county to county with only a few minutes of driving" and using "the language of a hundred hicks in a barroom." Richard stresses that "if there is one thing Wilgus does not need to be introduced to, it's driving while drinking"; and he repeats in his responses, "The story got to me and goes against my moral standards."

To Toni, Delmer is a "spineless and boring" man; however, she finds "Night Ride" enjoyable because she "can relate to some of the situations." What she sees in the story is "wild but realistic."

4. The Proffitts in Chicago"

Daniel can see that the Proffitt family has problems, but he does not think that any of the problems were severe enough to pick up and move away from the country. The family's vision of what their new life in Chicago will be like bothers him, and he believes Marvella should not have lied to her father. He does not like Zollie, because she appears to him "a mean step-mother." Overall, Daniel does not like what happens in the story.

Laura, on the other hand, sees "The Proffitts in Chicago" as "a success story." To her, Marvella makes "a mature decision to tell her father there is beauty in the city." Reading the story also reminds Laura of "the problem of poverty in our society." The Proffitt's move is an escape from poverty; and although the family is blind to what Chicago is going to be like, Laura admires their efforts to try for a better life.

Seeing the Proffitts as "a deep southern country family," Marshall "admires" them for leaving their home and moving to a strange city. As he reads the story, though, he cannot help but wonder if there are really people like the Proffitts in the world today.

Ruth Ann states, "I like [the story] because I can relate to it." Reading the story gives her "a warm feeling." She understands how people get tired of living somewhere and want a change. She does not like, however, how the father in the story is treated. The family, she believes, does not consider enough his feelings and love for the country. Also, she is not sure whether it is "correct" for Marvella to lie to her father. Concerning the false description Marvella gives her father of the view from the window, Ruth Ann notes, "There are a lot of things at stake here, and the question of right or wrong is not so clear-cut."

Because he has moved so many times, Richard, like Ruth Ann, can "relate" to the story. He sees the family's move as a necessary one for their survival. In short, he finds in the story an example of "what people have to do to survive."

Toni views the Proffitts as "a typical country family." Her dominant response, though, is a negative one because she does not like "the fake, idealistic pictures" of Chicago that Zollie and Marvella give the children. In addition, she disapproves of Marvella lying to her father. The deception in the story saddens her; and she adds, "I see realistic heartaches here."

5. "First Day of Winter"

Daniel does not like the way Hollis treats his parents. While he can see that having to stay at the farm and take care of his mother and father is "holding Hollis back," Daniel believes, "They are still his parents, and I think Hollis acts very cruel." He sees the situation with Hollis and his family as "sad." He especially does not approve of Hollis considering putting his parents in a state home, because, he tells his discussion group, "I have very negative feelings about nursing homes."

In contrast to Daniel's feelings about Hollis, Laura feels sorry for him. Because she sees Hollis as "stuck between a rock and a hard place," she admires him for his willingness to stay and take care of his parents. Although Laura sees Hollis as "smothered" and left with no choice but to care for his parents, she believes he would "feel guilty" if he did decide to leave them.

Marshall also "feels pity" for Hollis. He sees his predicament as "a real-life situation": Hollis has been "given too heavy a burden" and "is stranded on the farm." Marshall does not think Hollis' parents should "treat him like he was made to take care of them."

Ruth Ann's response to the cultural scene she identified in the story is a negative one. Focusing on Hollis' parents, she states, "Being put in a nursing home would probably be better than the treatment Hollis is giving them." She sees that "Hollis is not showing any love at all": he is "rude and blunt" and does not want "to face responsibility." Ruth Ann admits that "it is easy to pass judgment on a person when you haven't experienced what they have," but she believes that Hollis, as a son, "needs to consider his situation as a chance to repay his parents for what they probably did for him."

After reading the story, Richard feels that "it would be hard to go through life knowing you could have made something better of yourself." He sees that Hollis does love his parents, but "Hollis wants to move on to better things." Richard believes that he could not desert his parents if they were in "a situation like this one," but he pities Hollis for not having "a chance to be on his own."

Toni does not like the "unhappy, morbid feeling" she gets from this story. "The situation" makes her feel sad, not only because "Hollis feels like he got the short end of the stick" but also because she finds here an illustration of "the pain caused when parents are too old to take care of themselves." Toni continues to comment on how "eerie" the story is. She does not like it.

6. "Offerings"

Daniel does not know what to think about "Offerings": "I don't really know if I like it or not, because there is so much of it I don't understand." He thinks Sandra seems "a little crazy" and cannot figure out why she thinks "it would be nice to offer her ducks as a sacrifice." After re-reading and discussing the story, Daniel admits that other than liking the description of Sandra's home, he "didn't get anything out of it."

To Laura, "Sandra is a poor, husbandless young woman who tries to pretend she is someone she is not." While she sees that Sandra longs for another life, Laura still has questions about what happens in the story. For example, she does not understand the references to blood, death, and the ducks. She states, "Offerings" makes me feel drained and confused."

Marshall also finds "Offerings" confusing. He sees "an ordinary situation" where Sandra wants to be isolated so she can have freedom, but too much of the story is "hazy and unclear." Overall, Marshall finds the story "boring."

Sandra's "terrible housekeeping" is what bothers Ruth Ann. She does not see Sandra as a country person, because for her such a person is "someone who tries to make his/her land the best it can be." Sandra, Ruth Ann feels, either resents living in the country or is just lazy and enjoys living in the dirt. She prefers Sandra's grandmother over Sandra because she is "an immaculate woman who can't stand dirt." Ruth Ann also likes her because she is "sharp and sees through all the pretense that is going on." Much of the story "stumps" Ruth Ann, especially Sandra referring to her ducks as an offering.

Richard finds the story "dull" and does not understand what Sandra's "offerings" are. He thinks that he would never live like Sandra does nor would he ever try to hide things from his family the way she does. He sees her as perhaps an abandoned wife who cannot afford to fix up her home, but that does not excuse her lack of cleanliness.

Toni enjoys "Offerings" but does not particularly like all of the references to death. She concludes, however, that in the story death is an offering "made every year, day, month and minute." What she does not understand is "who the offerings are directed to." Toni thinks that Sandra, in contrast to her present life, "enjoyed her past and possibly longs for it." Under the circumstances, Toni thinks that "Sandra seems to be handling her life pretty well."

How the Informants' Backgrounds Affected Their Responses to the Stories

The purpose of this section of the chapter is to report conclusions on how the informants' cultural backgrounds affected their responses to the stories. Specifically, I analyzed data to determine (1) how the informants responded to familiar and unfamiliar cultural features of the stories, (2) what prior knowledge of literature and of Appalachia the informants displayed in their responses, and (3) if any stock or preconceived ideas about literature and Appalachia affected the informants' responses. I will present these findings, derived from analyses of the oral and written responses, participant observations, interviews, and ethnographic records, in realist accounts of the six informants.

Daniel

Daniel sees that all six stories could have taken place in the area where he is from. Having always lived in Southern Appalachia, he finds familiar features in each of the six stories; however, the first story he read, "The Return," contains for him the most familiar culture. A theme related to Daniel's cultural scene is the love he has for his home and family in Southwest Virginia; and in "The Return" Daniel finds a cultural scene similar to his own. In his responses to the story, he makes such statements as "I have experiences like this one every time I go home," "Like Wave, I love the outdoors," and "The story reminds me of the relationship I have with my grandparents." This familiarity with the culture of the text leads Daniel to state that the story is the one he "likes best." With the exception of the character of the great-grandmother, he finds in "The Return" "a picture" of his life.

A second story in which Daniel identifies familiar cultural features is "Night Ride." He finds in the story events similar to what he and his friends have often been involved in. As with "The Return," he states, "I could relate to the story and that made it more enjoyable."

When he reads "The Proffitts in Chicago" and "First Day of Winter," Daniel also finds familiar cultural features, but these aspects of the story elicit negative responses. Data support the assertion that Daniel hopes he will never have to live outside of Southwest Virginia; and, although he is generally quiet and reserved, he does not hold back when it comes to defending his home and his lifestyle. While he can understand the characters' problems in the story, reading "The Proffitts in Chicago" "bothers" him because he does not believe the family really needs to leave their home and move to the city. He sees them as "running away from their life" to go to a place that will not be any better for them.

Two familiar cultural features Daniel finds in "First Day of Winter" are taking care of elderly parents and placing family members in nursing homes. These features dominate Daniel's response to the story. From the time of the first reading, he relates Hollis' parents to his own grandfather who lives next door to him: "Someone has to stay with him all the time; and since we live right beside him, I know what it is like to be tied down. We all try to share the burden of this because it is not fair for one person to be tied down all the time." Daniel states that it is "not fair" for Hollis to have the sole responsibility of caring for his parents; however, he cannot condone his cruel and disrespectful treatment of them. He feels that Hollis and his brother could together work out some way to provide good care for their mother and father.

Hollis' considering putting his parents in a state home is even more disturbing to Daniel because he has "very negative feelings toward nursing homes." He states, "I have been to some with my parents to see people we know. Once when we were leaving one, I told them I wouldn't want one of my dogs to stay in there. They told me to remember that and never put them in a nursing home." For Daniel, whose cultural scene involves close family ties and family members willing to help one another, "this story is ruined by Hollis' treatment of his parents."

While the above four stories are the ones in which Daniel identified the most familiar cultural features and the ones that were for him the most meaningful selections, an examination of Table 4 in the third section of this chapter reveals that Daniel identifies and bases his responses on a limited number of domains in each of the four stories. Analyzing all of his written and oral responses, I found that in "The Return" Daniel referred to 13 out of 42 domains; in "Night Ride," 12 out of 73; in "The Proffitts in Chicago," 13 out of 76; and in "First Day of Winter," 17 out of 70. These data, in addition to Daniel's firm convictions about his home and family and his view of "good literature" as stories containing familiar subject matter, support the assertion that his responses to the stories tend to illustrate what Rosenblatt (1938/1983) calls a "stock" or "predetermined response elicited by the general subject of the work" (p. 100). In "The Proffitts in Chicago," for instance, the single domain of the family leaving their country environment dominates Daniel's view of the story and illustrates Rosenblatt's point that for some readers "a rural or urban background or regional loyalty" can possibly "encourage narrow or stereotyped preconceptions" (p. 101). Rosenblatt further notes that a stock response "may be produced by a word or phrase or an episode in a work whose general theme has nothing to do with this particular prejudice or emotional fixation of the reader" (p. 100). Daniel's emphasis on the two domains, caring for elderly parents and "the state home," throughout his responses to "First Day of Winter" is an example of how readers' personal reactions to single cultural features in a work can lead to restricted literary experiences.

In the other two stories, "Heat Lightning" and "Offerings," Daniel finds locales that are similar to where he lives; but, unlike the other four stories he has read, he does not "get anything out of them." Specifically, he does not "get the point" about the two main characters, Geneva and Sandra, and cannot relate to them. As a result, he does not like either of these selections. It is possible that Daniel's responses to these stories result from the fact that both protagonists are female. In his answers on the Attitude Toward Fiction Questionnaire, he indicates that he would rather read stories about male characters, preferably his own age. This factor may have influenced the following statement he made in an interview toward the end of the semester: "These were the worst stories we read and the hardest ones."

One of the assertions related to Daniel's knowledge of and attitude toward literature is that he sees reading literature as an enjoyable experience if the selections are ones that he can relate to and understand. Analysis of his responses to the stories significantly shows that when Daniel is not able to respond to familiar features of the cultural scene in a story, he turns to his prior knowledge of attributes of the style and structure of fiction to help him express his difficulty with a selection. This assertion is illustrated by a comparison of the statements he made about the literary characteristics of "The Return," the story he liked best, with those he made about "Offerings," his least favorite. The statements, included in Table 5, a complete list of statements he made about the ways the stories are written, show that for "The Return" Daniel makes only two references to the way the story is written, while for "Offerings" he made seven, including statements about setting and symbolism, literary terms that he did not mention in responses to the other five stories. Daniel's reliance on such statements in responding to unfamiliar cultural scenes in the stories appears to be one indication that he is uncomfortable with stories to which he cannot relate. Moreover, these statements appear to be a means of dismissing a story as too difficult or avoiding further work with the selection. Based on this pattern in his responses, Daniel seems to rely on this type of stock response when he does not immediately relate to a story.

Table 5: Statements Daniel Made About the Ways the Stories are Written

"The Return"

1. It is written in a very simple form
2. The organization makes it easy to follow

"Heat Lightning"

1. Its organization is not quite clear
2. Parts of the story seem unrelated

"Night Ride"

1. It is a type of narrative

"The Proffitts in Chicago"

1. The story should have more background information
2. The story is trying to show that you can't run away from your life

"First Day of Winter"

1. The beginning is good, but I didn't like the ending

"Offerings"

1. I did like the setting, but that was about all
2. It is a story with a lot of symbolism
3. I think I might have liked it if it was written in a form I could understand
4. I never found a certain organization to it
5. It is very hard to follow
6. I can't find a purpose in it
7. I don't know what the story is trying to say

Laura

In her final interview Laura states that during her lifetime she has been "exposed to the kinds of poor and common characters portrayed in the [six] stories." She has come in contact with such people in her neighborhood and school and within her own family. Recognizing these character types in her reading, Laura believes, helps her to "appreciate the stories." Analysis of her responses, however, supports the assertion that, although she identifies familiar cultural features in each story, she does not tend to compare herself and her own cultural scene to the stories' characters and settings. In all of her responses to the stories, she directly relates herself to only one of the cultural scenes she identifies. Responding to her first reading of "The Return," she states, "I have experienced the same excited feelings [as Wave does] after coming home from a summer trip." She expresses other responses to the cultural scenes she finds in the stories in less personal terms, using such words and phrases as "typical," "common," and "like the lives of many students in my classes [at Belvedere]."

Assertions on Laura's cultural background account for this absence of personal commentary in her responses. Although she does not do a lot of independent reading, she has been a conscientious student of literature in the past and believes that her education has included satisfactory training in how to read and interpret literature. Also, she views a story as providing "a learning experience" and expects "to get something out of it." A domain analysis of Laura's oral and written responses to the stories shows that she talks and writes about all of the stories by using literary terminology, such as character, theme, style, and conflict. In other words, Laura's knowledge of literary analysis and her expectations that a selection will be didactic influence the types of responses she has to the six stories. A list of the statements Laura made about the ways the stories are written in Table 6 illustrates this assertion.

Table 6: Statements Laura Made About the Ways the Stories Are Written

"The Return"

1. The diction intensifies and strengthens the character types
2. The theme appeared to me completely different from the rest of the class
3. I enjoyed the simple style and use of few characters
4. The story focuses around a main idea that virtually relates to everyone
5. Litton shows the common conflict between husband and wife
6. Litton uses countless details

"Heat Lightning"

1. The accent aids the reader in actually visualizing the characters
2. I hoped someone [in my group] would take a more in-depth look at the true meaning of the story
3. I enjoyed the ending

"Night Ride"

1. Delmer's free spirit is characterized by his loud, exclamatory voice
2. I saw the theme of guilt as a main importance
3. Maybe the purpose of the story is to reflect on the loss of Glen

"The Proffitts in Chicago"

1. I understand better the parallelism of the blindness to the theme
2. I feel confused about the author's purpose
3. Without these elements, the story would be meaningless
4. I found the story to be somewhat complex in meaning and difficult to interpret

"First Day of Winter"

1. The language and accents reflect the type of characters in the story
2. I see the dismal setting
3. I enjoyed the author's use of vivid detail
4. I realized also the use of symbols in the story

"Offerings"

1. At first, I thought I understood the meaning, but then I became confused
2. The language tells a lot about the characters
3. I saw "That's Entertainment" as irony
4. I thought about the filthiness of the setting
5. The general meaning of the story is effective, but various themes are not clear, and I still have some unanswered questions about what the author is doing

6. I saw the dead bird as a symbol of the death of Sandra's world
7. I question the continuous references to death and blood
8. I understand the basic meaning and the characters' relationships in the story

Another influence from Laura's cultural background that may account for her responses to the stories has to do with her mother's explanation of the term "Appalachian." Laura is not in the habit of questioning her mother's knowledge and opinions; and, based on her mother's statement that "Appalachian" refers to "poorer or lower class families that live between this [the Belvedere] area and Kentucky," Laura, now believing that she "understands" the label and seeing how the stories "fit" it, does not apply it to herself. She is satisfied with her mother's explanation and finds in the stories illustrations of the type of people her mother described. For example, "It is a typical poor family" in "Heat Lightning," "It is a poor country family" in "The Proffitts in Chicago," and "Sandra is a pathetic poor girl" in "Offerings."

Another feature that Laura emphasizes each time she identifies it in the stories is a character displaying maturity and responsibility. An important theme in Laura's cultural background is her desire to be responsible and mature, not only because she believes her mother expects these traits of her but also because they are qualities she personally desires and admires in others.

Data analysis shows that she is quick to identify these traits in the cultural scenes of the stories and that they influence her responses. For example, she states that "The Proffitts in Chicago" is her favorite of the six stories. In one of her responses to this selection she writes,

> The story caught my attention because it was like a success story: the poor family who had nothing moved to the big city where they were exposed to conveniences which they had only heard of. I admired Marvella's mature decision to create a Utopia-like surrounding for her blind father. I feel that Marvella's maturity and sympathy toward her father were the keys to this story's success, for without these elements, the story would be meaningless.

Furthermore, in "The Return" she sees Wave as "mature" in his relationship with his grandparents; and at the end of "Night Ride," Laura looks at Wilgus as "showing a great deal of maturity when he drives home." She interprets Geneva in "Heat Lightning" as a responsible woman because, even though she "wants so much more in life," she goes back home and accepts the ways things are. She also sees Hollis in "First Day of Winter" as responsible. While she understands his resentment of having to stay home and care for his parents, she "admires" him and speculates that if he were to leave, he "would feel guilty."

In sum, data support the assertion that Laura reads the stories carefully and for each selection uses previous experiences with literary analysis to help shape her responses. While she has always been a resident of Southern Appalachia, she directly compares her life to only one of the cultural scenes she finds in the stories. She is not, however, critical of the scenes but responds to them much like an interested bystander who especially takes note of characters who exhibit mature and responsible behavior.

Marshall

In analyzing Marshall's responses to the stories, I discovered a theme of his unfamiliarity with some of the cultural scenes he identifies in his responses. In "The Return," for example, he finds a scene that he "can picture" in his mind and that he describes as "not really odd"; however, he states that "Maybe some one who is familiar with this scene would rate this story higher." In another selection, "The Proffitts in Chicago," Marshall "cannot really relate to the story." He explains, "I guess I really never thought of a home without water, or how someone could be so fascinated with a commode." He wonders, too, if there really are people like the Proffitts. In his final interview he concludes that "these stories would be unfamiliar to most people" and adds, "I've never heard of shooting road signs or eating cornbread in milk, or [eating] slumgullion. These stories are about people who live in areas, mainly mountainous, unfamiliar to us, the readers."

In his responses Marshall deals with unfamiliar cultural scenes in the stories in two ways. First, he applies to the selections his criteria that a story needs to be "fast-paced" and should contain "believable characters"; and above all, he expects a story to "entertain" him. Although he finds some unfamiliar features in the story "Night Ride," he labels it "the most entertaining story" and his "favorite" of the six selections because "the author does a superb job of not only keeping the reader on edge but also of giving him or her a feeling of actually being Delmer or Wilgus." In addition to "Night Ride," he also finds "First Day of Winter" "very entertaining" because he sees Hollis' predicament as realistic and keeps wondering throughout the story what he is going to do about it.

Marshall also uses the entertainment criterion to evaluate the other four stories. "The Return," he states, "lacks entertainment." He finds "Heat Lightning" to be "lacking in entertainment"; "The Proffitts in Chicago" is only "semi-enjoyable"; and about "Offerings," the story he likes least, he states, "I really found this story un-entertaining. If someone was to give me this story as an entertainment piece, I would have to re-evaluate that person."

The total set of his written and oral responses supports the assertion that Marshall categorizes the six stories in terms of how well they entertain him. His invariably mentioning this criterion in his initial responses to the stories indicates that "entertaining" or "lacks entertainment" has become a convenient stock response to reading literature.

From the analysis of Marshall's responses to the stories, I also found that he deals with unfamiliar cultural scenes by creating, on the basis of one or more features of a story, a more familiar "picture" in his mind. This pattern appears in responses to four of the stories. As an illustration, the description of Geneva and her home in the story "Heat Lightning" becomes a catalyst for Marshall to form a rather elaborate mental picture built around more familiar and meaningful details. The result of this mental activity is that Marshall actually replaces the features of the story (see the summary overview of "Heat Lightning" in Appendix F) with a new cultural scene and then describes it as his response to the story. In his first response to "Heat Lightning," he writes,

> I found "Heat Lightning" lacking entertainment. I guess the stories I like to read are action-packed, suspenseful, or maybe even humorous. This story lacks these traits. I did find, however, that I was able to picture a scene or setting and characters. The picture I sketched in my mind was an old community with an old dirt road that leads up to an abandoned hill. Small houses surround the road on both sides, the kind of houses you would see in coal-related areas. The houses are drab grey with traces of chipped white paint. The yards are bare. There is a rickety old porch that supports a couple of chairs.
>
> I picture Geneva as a person who gets up at the "crack of dawn" or early enough to tend to her chores and serve breakfast. Her eyes are squinted and grey, and her hair is jet black with traces of grey. Her hands and skin are pale and weather-beaten, as if she has seen many cold winters. She does not complain but keeps working day and night.
>
> This is only an opinionated description of my views from the story, but this is what I received after reading it.

Similar examples of Marshall's creating "pictures" based on his reading appear in his responses to "The Return": "I sketched in my mind the scene of a moderately large farm . . . ."; "The Proffitts in Chicago": "I can picture the

Proffitts as a deep southern family . . . ."; and "Offerings": "The story is meant to give the reader a clear picture . . . ." It is important to note, however, that his responses to "Night Ride" and "First Day of Winter," the stories he found most "entertaining," do not contain this pattern of picture-making.

One of the assertions related to Marshall's knowledge of and attitudes toward literature is that his main criticism of previous literature instruction was not feeling free to express his opinions and interpretations. In reading the six Appalachian short stories, Marshall indicates that he enjoys the freedom of responding to and discussing them without fear of criticism. Perhaps this atmosphere of freedom encourages him to create "pictures" (which he obviously enjoys doing) and to write and talk about how the stories stimulated him to carry out this process.

On the other hand, this type of response may be the means for Marshall simply to "come up" with some kind of response when it is asked for. He may be relying on these responses, not only because of his unfamiliarity with the cultural scenes he finds in the selections but also because he is uncomfortable with writing and talking about works of literature. In his responses, he displays very little evidence of applying the prior experience he has had with the study of literature to the reading of the stories. After analyzing all of his responses, I found only seven statements (listed in Table 7) where he directly uses literary terminology or refers to the way the authors write.

Table 7: Statements Marshall Made About the Ways the Stories Are Written

"The Return"

1. Wave's grandparents symbolize the middle-class country person

"Heat Lightning"

1. This story lacks these traits [of entertainment]

"Night Ride"

1. Delmer symbolizes the deep Appalachian
2. Norman gives the reader explicit details
3. The detail in "Night Ride" is superb

"The Proffitts in Chicago"

1. None

"First Day of Winter"

1. None

"Offerings"

1. I could pin-point no meaning
2. The author gives a good description
3. It was kind of like reading one of Edgar Allen Poe's works, descriptive, yet hazy or unclear

A final assertion pertaining to the influence of cultural background on Marshall's responses to the stories has to do with his prior knowledge of and experiences with the Appalachian region. Analysis of data pertaining to Marshall's cultural background and his responses to the stories supports the assertion that he has an ambivalent attitude toward Appalachia and its people. On the one hand, there are in the data themes of Marshall's interest in the area where he has chosen to live and to attend college, of his concern for the problem of poverty in Appalachia, and of his desire to learn more about the region that has intrigued him since childhood. Consistent with these themes, Marshall's stance as a reader is, at times, one where he is reading about an appealing, yet, as he describes in an interview, an "unfamiliar" area and its people. This assertion is illustrated by one of his responses to "The Proffitts in Chicago":

> I can't really say that I relate to this story or understand these people's problems, but I could imagine myself in their situation. The Proffitts saw that there was nothing else left for them . . . . I admired them, yet felt pity for them too. I mean here these people have never been out of their town, but decided to move because of Zollie's interpretation of how their new life would be. They took a total reverse and moved to an area that is totally modernized (maybe too much). I admired them for taking on such a challenge.

On the other hand, there are times when Marshall's responses to the stories take the form of stereotypical and ambiguous statements about Appalachia. In these responses he generalizes about the stories and freely uses terms such as "Appalachian," "people from the country," and "hillbillies" interchangeably. Marshall's comments on Appalachia in the interview and artifact data led to the assertion that he realizes how often in the past he has been quick to categorize people and that he believes that, since his move to Southwest Virginia, he has acquired "deeper" definitions of the terms "hillbilly" and "redneck." Many of his responses to the stories, however, reveal that, even though he is conscious of the inappropriateness and danger of labeling people, he still sometimes resorts to stereotyping. As a result, he is not always basing an oral or written response on specific domains of a story when he writes and talks about the cultural scene he has identified in the selection. The following oral and written responses are illustrations of the data that support this assertion:

> Every story we read symbolizes the typical "Appalachian" or "redneck," if you will. For example, Wave's grandparents in "The Return" symbolize the middle-class country person.
>
> The story that gave me the clearest picture of an average Appalachian or hillbilly is "Heat Lightning." Geneva represents the typical hard-working Appalachian who always dreamed of a better place, but it was just out of her reach. So she makes do with what she has.
>
> Delmer [in "Night Ride"] represents the hillbilly type. He is a deep Appalachian who enjoys having a good time, without a care in the world.
>
> Every story gives an example of a typical incident that could happen to an Appalachian resident or a country person.
>
> The stories illustrate the lives of people from the country or hillbillies.

Ruth Ann

In her final interview Ruth Ann states that what stands out to her in the six stories is "characters who have to cope with the way their life is." In analyzing her responses to the stories, I discovered a dominant pattern of her direct expression of approval or disapproval of how the characters "cope" within the cultural scenes she identifies. Analysis of interview and artifact data reveals that three aspects of her cultural background--home and family, the experience of moving to a new environment, and religion--have the strongest influence on her responses.

After reading "The Proffitts in Chicago," Ruth Ann immediately compares Marvella and her family's move from the country to Chicago to her own move to Southwest Virginia. The story, she states, "instilled [me] with a love of life and home that made it easy for me to sympathize with Dorman being reluctant to leave." Ruth Ann also identifies with the Proffitt family because, she states, "I know what it is like to pull up your roots and settle in another place." Furthermore, her admiration of Marvella, the main character, causes her to designate the story as "the one I liked best." She finds Marvella "mature beyond her years"; and, although she stresses that she does not believe in lying, Ruth Ann approves of Marvella's making up for her blind father the beautiful description of the view from their apartment window. It was, she believes, the character's only way of helping her father adjust; and it is an example, she explains, of one of those times in life when "right or wrong isn't always clear-cut."

In contrast to her responses to "The Proffitts in Chicago," Ruth Ann's responses to the other five stories contain an overall theme of disapproval of the characters' actions. First of all, she feels that Wave in "The Return" is immature and "just plain silly." She cannot understand how someone his age could become "giddy" over something as inappropriate as listening to his great-grandmother use the bathroom. She believes that the author should not have included this scene in the story. Overall, Wave's actions and thoughts in the story "turn [her] off."

Having been taught that drinking alcohol is wrong and also having seen its effects on some of her family members, Ruth Ann in her responses to "Night

Ride" gives the most attention to the feature of Delmer and Wilgus drinking. Because she sees "the story as dealing so much with drinking," this selection is for her "unfavorable." She thinks that it might be better if there were some "insight into why they were drinking"; but, as it is, the story reminds her too much of the consequences of what she has always been taught not to do. Also, as in "The Return," she does not think that some scenes should have been included. The bad language the characters occasionally use also disturbs her.

In "Heat Lightning" Ruth Ann sees how Geneva's boring life has "gotten to her," but she cannot condone the character's "blowing all of her husband's money that he has saved." This feature of the story is significant to Ruth Ann because, as she states, "I have been taught that you never take someone's money, not even a wife's or husband's." The only excuse she can offer for Geneva's "shocking" behavior is that "she had gone off the deep end."

Responding to the story "First Day of Winter," Ruth Ann acknowledges that she has not yet had the responsibility of looking after her parents as Hollis has to do, but she cannot help feeling disapproval for the way this character talks to and treats his mother and father. Because of her close relationship with her parents and because of her belief that they are to be "honored," she is disturbed by Hollis' actions in the story. As she states, "The negative feelings I had for Hollis at the beginning of the story carried through until the end."

The main feature of the story "Offerings" that Ruth Ann identifies is Sandra's "terrible housekeeping." Coming from a home where orderliness and neatness are prized and having been taught that "a filthy house looks bad on a person," Ruth Ann is bothered by Sandra's lack of neatness and cleanliness.

Moreover, she identifies Sandra as "a country person"; and, based on Ruth Ann's experience, such a person is "someone that tries hard to make his/her land the best it can be." Sandra's falling short of meeting this criterion colors Ruth Ann's responses to the character.

The above examples of culturally familiar features that Ruth Ann identifies and responds to in the stories support the assertion that cultural background influences her responses to the stories to the extent that a single feature of a selection can overpower other possibilities for response and interpretation. The features she emphasizes show that for Ruth Ann, family, home, and religious influences and teachings appear to be dominant influences on her literary responses.

Data analysis also reveals that Ruth Ann does not apply the term "Appalachian" to any of the stories; however, she believes that all of the six selections could have taken place in the area where she now lives. They all, she states, have "country settings" and contain "characters who are country people with a slower lifestyle." She indicates that she enjoys living in the country and likes the "slower lifestyle" that she and her family have found in Southwest Virginia; but, in terms of her responses to the stories, the fact that she sees the settings and characters as "country" does not appear to affect or replace other, and apparently much stronger, influences on her readings of the stories.

Data analysis further reveals that prior experiences with reading and with the study of literature are additional influences on Ruth Ann's responses to the stories. First, she has always loved to read but expects a story or novel to be enjoyable to the point that she does not want it to end. Unlike fast-paced western novels that she prefers to read, "The Return," "Heat Lightning," "Night Ride," "First Day of Winter," and "Offerings" are too "slow" and "boring" for her. She especially disliked "The Return," not only because it has a main character whom she thought silly and immature but also because none of the events she was expecting to happen occurred. Describing her first reading of this story, which begins with Wave Mabry driving rather recklessly toward his grandparents' home, Ruth Ann states,

> When Wave was driving reckless, I expected him to be killed. When Mamaw Little was moaning and carrying on, I thought she would die. Neither one happened or anything else for that matter. The story set me up for a spell-binding ending, but it never followed through. I was very disappointed in the story, because nothing exciting happened.

Another influence on Ruth Ann's responses that is related to her previous experience with the study of literature in school has to do with her appreciation of the freedom she experiences in responding to the six stories. In her final interview she notes that having had this freedom to respond to and discuss the stories throughout the semester without fear of "being condemned" probably had a lot to do with how she responded to them. She states,

> These discussions were better than anything I have ever been in. No one seemed to be afraid to speak out. A lot of times in high school I would just let others talk, and I would sit back and get by. I think people, when you given them a chance, are more willing to give their ideas when they aren't going to be criticized for it. I liked being able to say what I felt.

In an atmosphere where she is free to express her thoughts about the stories, Ruth Ann primarily focuses on how well the selections keep her interest and attention and on how she evaluates the characters in their respective cultural situations. Analysis of her statements about how the stories are written shows that she has a knowledge of literary terminology but, with the exception of a few isolated comments, does not choose to use the terms until she is asked in her final interview to comment on the authors' styles or methods of writing. Even then, it is important to observe that she makes more statements about the way her favorite story, "The Proffitts in Chicago," is written than any of the other five (see Table 8). Data show that in responding to the stories, Ruth Ann draws more on the influence of her own cultural scene and personal reading tastes than on her previous work with literature in school. She appears to use her knowledge of literary terminology only when she is asked to do so or if she feels the need to clarify or emphasize a previously stated response.

Table 8: Statements Ruth Ann Made About the Ways the Stories Are Written

"The Return"

1. The story did not seem to have much of a point
2. The story was slow-paced and had very little excitement
3. The story was boring the entire way through

"Heat Lightning"

1. The author used several flashbacks
2. There was very little dialogue
3. Its ending surprised me

"Night Ride"

1. The story did not seem to have much of a plot
2. I don't think the author needed to include some of the scenes and the kind of language he used

"The Proffitts in Chicago"

1. It was written in a smooth way
2. It flowed along
3. The author makes a few insights along the way as to the family's situation
4. The story didn't have a lot of dialogue, but what little there was was important
5. It made me put myself in the characters' shoes for awhile and understand them
6. The story's style seems to draw or ask for compassion
7. I thought the author used a good choice of words

"First Day of Winter"

1. The story trudged along with hardly any action
2. There is an overuse of description

"Offerings"

1. It is peppered with flashbacks and reminiscences
2. It has a confusing ending

Richard

Through the analysis of Richard's interview and artifact data, I discovered that the main features of his cultural scene have to do with the relationship he has with his family, the influence of his religious beliefs, the experiences he has had in living in many different places, and the enjoyment he derives from meeting and being around people. The analysis of his responses to the six stories reveals that, when Richard identifies in a selection any of these cultural features, he generally tends to use them not only as a basis for his response but also as an opportunity to express his personal feelings and opinions on subjects that are important to him. For example, in the story "Night Ride" Richard identifies as a culturally familiar feature a young boy witnessing an older man driving while drinking. The following written responses that Richard had to two readings of the story illustrate how this feature dominates his thinking:

> In the beginning of the story I thought the whole idea of them joy riding was funny. When they started to drink, then I started to feel uneasy about the whole thing. I didn't like Wilgus being taken on a joy ride with an adult who should know better. I felt that they were going to have an accident all through the story. I really got disturbed when Delmer started to shoot the .38 and began using foul language. Maybe it's just me! I think I disapprove of this because it goes against everything I believe in, that is my morals.
>
> I disapprove of Delmer's immoral contribution to a minor and letting him drive his car while intoxicated. We hear so much today about drunk driving and all the deaths caused by alcoholism. I really dread hearing about accidents caused by drunk drivers. My best friend is paralyzed because of a drunk driver. I remember when we used to go out drinking. Being older than Bill, I felt like I was being a bad influence on him. In the same perspective, Delmer was a bad influence on Wilgus. If there's one thing he doesn't need to be introduced to it is drinking and driving. It wasn't only the drinking that offended me, but it was the language they used. The Bible describes swearing as a means of avoiding a direct yes or no answer. I guess that might be where they get the slogan, "Just say no!" This statement can go with

> everything you have to deal with in everyday life. You don't have to drink, swear or do drugs to have happiness. The answer is in the Bible.

In each of the other five stories, Richard focuses on the culturally familiar feature of parents and their relationship with their children. The characters in "The Return" remind him of his own parents who have had to take care of elderly family members. He relates the mother in "Heat Lightning" to parents he has known who have "spoiled brats" to deal with. Sandra in "Offerings" bothers him because she tries to hide her problems from her family. He identifies with the family in "The Proffitts in Chicago" because he has also moved and knows what it is like to adjust to new places. And in Richard's favorite of the six stories, "First Day of Winter," he likes the way the author depicts the relationship between Hollis and his parents. In the following response to this story he explains why he identifies with Hollis' conflict:

> Hollis is in a situation where he is unable to do some of the things he wanted because of his parents. On the other hand, he didn't want to leave his parents not cared for because of his love for them. In my family, my mother is looked after a great deal because of some physical problems she has. I spent little time with friends because I took her places she needed to go. Don't get me wrong, I love my mother more than anything in the world, but a person needs time to spend with his or her friends also. Friendships can be a wonderful thing if granted the time to build on them. Hollis seemed as though he didn't have the chance to do this. I see a lot of myself in him. If we were put together, we could probably express some of the same feelings about this situation. A lot of times it's good to know you are not the only one who goes through troubles alone.

The above illustrations support the assertion that Richard enjoys relating his own experiences to what he finds in the stories and is content to base his responses on only a few culturally familiar features.

Relating his responses to his previous experiences with reading and the study of literature also provides insight into Richard's methods of response. He states that his English teachers always welcomed and valued his opinions and interpretations; and his favorite part of high school literature classes was the discussions. As he looks back on them, these discussions were a time when he could tell what he thought about a reading assignment, and then the teacher would "throw in some things that maybe the students didn't cover." Richard always "got the feeling" that his teachers wanted him to talk and ask lots of questions, and he "enjoyed doing that."

It is important to note that in his responses Richard does not make any comments about the ways the authors write the stories. When asked, however, in the final interview about how he thought the ways the stories were written had influenced his responses, he commented on three of the selections (see Table 9). He explains that his favorite story, "First Day of Winter," is "written from a narrative point of view" and adds, "I felt like I was sitting back and someone was telling me the story." He also states, "'Night Ride' has the language of a hundred hicks in a barroom," and "The way 'Offerings' is written bothered me." Other than his comments on these stories, Richard does not choose to address the ways the stories are written but places his attention on the more "enjoyable" cultural features he identifies in the stories.

In his responses to the stories, Richard does not refer to Appalachia or make any comparisons between the settings of the stories and the Southwest Virginia area where he is attending college. In an interview, he indicates that he is not sure of the meaning of the word "Appalachian" but states, "It sounds kind of country, yeah, something like a farming type of thing." Discussing the stories in his final interview, he does not categorize them on the basis of setting but sees that they relate to each other because "all the characters seem to be dealing with poverty." He further explains that "all of the stories have something to do with someone who is deprived of something." These findings from the analysis of Richard's responses support the assertion that he does not think so much in terms of the specific settings of the stories but places more attention on the plights of the individual characters. Even though he uses the term "country folks" to describe the characters in "The Return" and "The Proffitts in Chicago" and "hillbilly" and "hick" to label the family in "Night Ride," there is no evidence that his responses to the characters are directly influenced by the settings he finds depicted in the stories.

Table 9: Statements Richard Made About the Ways the Stories Are Written

"The Return"

1. None

"Heat Lightning"

1. None

"Night Ride"

1. "Night Ride" has the language of a hundred hicks in a barroom
2. The names of the characters are typical hick names

"The Proffitts in Chicago"

1. None

"First Day of Winter"

1. It is written from a narrative point of view
2. It felt like I was sitting back, and someone was telling me the story
3. The author uses symbolism

"Offerings"

1. The author's style was very jumpy
2. The setting and scenes were those of a poor family
3. The way "Offerings" was written bothered me

Toni

Summarizing her experiences with the six stories during her final interview, Toni explains that, although she has never lived in "country, earthy environments" like those depicted in the selections, she found many familiar and realistic situations and characters in her reading. She, however, immediately makes two additional--and negative--observations about the group of stories. First, she states:

> These stories are all too realistic. Because of my past and how I have had to deal with death, responsibility, confusion, and lots of changes, I really did not want to read anything realistic. You know, I've just lived enough realism. I guess you could say my experiences and my lifestyle affected my responses to these stories in a negative way.

Second, thinking further about the six selections collectively, Toni admits that "the stories were generally boring." Earlier in the semester she states that she expects literature to be "captivating, full of energy, and never boring." It appears that she wants a story she is about to read to be exciting and to deal with upbeat, positive subjects and situations that do not fall into the category of "realistic." Reviewing her written and oral responses to the stories, I found evidence that these criteria concerning literature preferences do affect her responses. "The Return" "bores" her and is "not exciting." "Heat Lightning" is "boring." Delmer in "Night Ride" is "boring," and the realism of the story disturbs Toni. "The Proffitts in Chicago" contains "realistic heartaches." "First Day of Winter" is "too morbid" and "unhappy." The last story, "Offerings," has too many references to death that "bother" her.

While Toni does not hesitate to respond to the negative aspects she finds in the stories, she, on the other hand, does not ignore features or domains that have more positive meanings for her. For example, although she finds "Heat Lightning" boring and uneventful, she states that it is her favorite of the six stories because of Geneva, the main character, "a woman," Toni explains, "with responsibility and impulsiveness that I can relate to." She sees that, like her, Geneva does have a "wild streak," and she can easily understand why the character makes the decision to "break out of her rut." As she herself has had to do, Toni likes to see people create positive experiences from difficult ones.

Toni also, in contrast to the other five informants, likes the character Sandra in "Offerings." Even though she finds the story "strange and abstract," Toni enjoys how Sandra, in the midst of marriage problems and alienation from her family, "seems to be handling her life well." She does not care for the references to illness and death in the story; but, as in her response to Geneva, she finds in "Offerings" a protagonist whose independence and efforts to overcome defeat and hardship are appealing to her.

Another illustration of how Toni's cultural background affects her identification of and responses to features of a story has to do with another female protagonist. As she first reads "The Proffitts in Chicago," Toni admires the responsibility and maturity that the main character, Marvella, displays. However, when Toni reaches the latter part of the story where Marvella describes for her blind father an imaginary landscape of flowers, trees, and blue sky outside of their apartment, her response to the character changes to complete disapproval. She does not see Marvella's decision to create the scene for her father as an act of love but one of deception. It is a lie that can only lead to a "devastating fall" for the man. Being unable to tolerate people who are not honest and truthful in their relationships with her, Toni indicates that Marvella's "poor handling" of her responsibility to her father and family bothers her more than anything else she found in the six stories. For this reason she designates "The Proffitts in Chicago" as her least favorite of the selections.

Other than observing that the six stories "all take place in the country or mountains," Toni's responses to the stories include no references to Appalachia and no comparisons between the cultures depicted in the stories and the region where she is now attending college. Although in interviews she voices her observations about the "slow pace" that seems to characterize people in Southwest Virginia and about all the "hicks" she has seen in the area, Toni's responses show that she is more influenced by her belief that, although people exhibit "external differences," they are basically the same no matter where they live. The fact that Toni sees all six stories as taking place in the country or mountains does not appear to influence her overall responses that the group of stories is too realistic as well as generally boring. More concerned that reading literature will entertain her and provide an escape from reality, she does not seem to focus on any features of the individual stories simply because they are unique to a particular region.

As she reads, responds to, and discusses the stories, Toni enjoys the freedom of expressing her own observations and opinions. The lack of such freedom is one of the main criticisms she has of her public school education. Toni sees herself as "very individualistic"; and her oral and written responses to the stories reflect her direct, independent manner of communicating her thoughts. The analysis of her responses shows, however, that the stories do not merely become sounding boards for her personal opinions and beliefs. Unlike some of the other informants, she does not base a response on a limited number of domains in a story. She appears to read the stories carefully and to respond to more holistic views of the selections. A domain analysis of her responses reveals that in all but two of the stories she identifies in her responses more domains than any of the other five informants (see Table 4). The analysis also shows that, even for responses to stories she especially disliked, such as "The Proffitts in Chicago" and "First Day of Winter," Toni focuses on a greater number of domains than any of the other informants when they respond to the same stories.

Also related to Toni's detailed reading of the stories is her repeated references to the authors' use of description (see Table 10, a list of the statements she made about the ways the stories are written). Analysis of all of her responses to the stories reveals that she makes eleven statements about this aspect of the authors' styles of writing, using such adjectives as "excellent," "clear," "vivid," and "awesome." Just as Toni's interview and artifact data support the assertion that she has always been a keen observer of the people, places, and activities around her, she exhibits the same eye for detail in her readings of the stories, allowing her responses to result from more thorough interactions with the selections.

Table 10: Statements Toni Made About the Ways the Stories Are Written

"The Return"

1. I found the style to be somewhat amusing
2. The author's description is vivid
3. I like the clear and simple descriptions
4. The author is awesome in his descriptions

"Heat Lightning"

1. The detail and description are excellent
2. The story is too long
3. The description is extraordinary
4. The author uses detail with much clarity

"Night Ride"

1. The organization was excellent
2. It is possibly symbolic how the guy drinks and was so bad
3. There is foreshadowing when Wilgus sits back in the suicide corner of the truck
4. The ending left me hanging
5. The story uses excellent descriptions

"The Proffitts in Chicago"

1. The opening of the story is interesting
2. There is awesome description
3. I see exceptional description

"First Day of Winter"

1. It is written in third person in the beginning and then goes into the characters' dialect
2. The description is vivid, and the organization is crystal clear
3. The fox is symbolic
4. The first paragraph has significance

"Offerings"

1. It is written in a narrative form
2. The organization is poor
3. It is written in third person
4. The description is very real
5. The way the author writes is too realistic for me

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

In this ethnographic research study I have explored the ways culture is associated with response to literature. Using first-semester college freshmen and contemporary Appalachian short stories, I have looked at two aspects of cultural influence--the cultural backgrounds of the readers and the cultures depicted in the texts of these stories. Triangulation of data sources and data analysis procedures, along with a systematic selection of informants, has resulted in findings that reveal the numerous, complex, and fascinating ways that readers, because of the interaction between their cultural backgrounds and the cultures of the texts they encounter, discover meaning in literature and express those meanings in the forms of oral and written response. Form the data I collected in the study, I was able to draw specific conclusions on how cultural influences affected the responses of each of six informants.

Looking now at the informants as representatives of cultural groups that I and other teachers will likely continue to meet in the classroom, I will in this chapter summarize my conclusions associated with each informant and then discuss, on the basis of these findings, implications related to response theory and the teaching of literature. Following these discussions are suggestions for further ethnographic research that the study has brought to light.

Summary of Findings

Readers Who Have Always Lived in the Culture Depicted in the Stories

Daniel is a young adult male who is reading stories that depict familiar cultural features within the setting of the same geographical region where he grew up. Specifically, he finds in these stories parallels to the Southern Appalachian area that he loves; and he is especially quick to respond to those features that are related to his rural, family-centered cultural scene. When the depictions of these features in a story correspond with his own beliefs and experiences, Daniel looks at the literary selection as an extension of his own life. As a result, he responds favorably to a complete work of this kind, although, more often than not, he bases the response on only a limited number of the total features in the story. Any deviation within a story from the familiar and accepted aspects of his own cultural scene, however, results in his giving a negative response and often his dismissing the literary work as something that he does not want to deal with anymore.

As an informant, Daniel continues the pattern I discovered in my pilot study of the reader who, recognizing familiar features in a piece of literature, immediately responds to and evaluates the work on the basis of those aspects, without further serious consideration of additional features of the selection. Such readers appear content with this type of response because they have recognized in the selection something that matches their own beliefs and attitudes, and, therefore, choose to respond in the form of a defense or statement of approval. Similarly, these readers appear to view a statement of disapproval concerning a cultural depiction as an equally satisfactory response.

The second informant, Laura, is also a native Appalachian; however, her responses to the Appalachian stories are quire different from Daniel's. Her reactions contradict the widespread assumption that, aside from gender differences, all readers who are from the region depicted in a group of fictional texts share common cultural backgrounds and will, consequently, have similar responses to the selections. Analysis of Laura's and Daniel's responses to the stories illustrates that a reader's cultural background can include any number of different components that can affect reader response.

In Laura's case, the meanings she derives from the stories are more influenced by the cultural components of her home and school than by any identification she has with the Appalachian region. Because of her previous experiences with literature in school, Laura responds to the stories by using a more traditional literary analysis approach and by placing emphasis on finding lessons or morals in the selections.

Consistent with the same qualities that she has learned to admire and emulate, Laura's responses tend to focus on characters who display responsibility and maturity. However, unlike Daniel, whose responses contain comparisons and contrasts between him and specific characters, Laura generally responds to the stories without directly commenting on the relationships between the characters' experiences and her own. She acknowledges her familiarity with the types of characters and their situations that appear in the Appalachian stories; however, she, again unlike Daniel, does not equate her own cultural scene with any of those that she discovers in the selections.

Readers Who Have Limited, Recent Direct Contact with the Culture Depicted in the Stories

Marshall and Ruth Ann represent young adults whose cultural backgrounds involve living in urban areas outside of the Appalachian region until their move to rural Appalachia, where they have lived at least one year. Although Marshall expresses an interest in Appalachia and appears to be glad that he is now living in the area he has enjoyed visiting since his childhood, he displays in his responses to the stories an ambivalent view toward the region and its people. In his responses, negative stereotypical statements are juxtaposed with personal sentiments about the area and a concern for its problems of poverty and unemployment. Marshall admits that the region depicted in the stories is in many ways unfamiliar to him, yet, in a number of his responses, he relies on generalities and uses a limited number of domains from a story as the basis of his observations. Ironically, Marshall explains that, since his move to Appalachia, he has become aware of his previous dangerous tendency to stereotype and label people. His responses, though, reveal that he still resorts to these practices as he talks and writes about his experiences with the stories. As a component of his cultural background, Marshall's preconceived ideas about Appalachia remain with him and illustrate the fact that such learned attitudes and beliefs are not easily eliminated.

Marshall also represents the reader who has limited previous experiences with the study of literature. In his responses, he compensates for his apparent insecurity in writing and talking about literature by evaluating a story on the single basis of how successfully it entertained him. Also, when he is asked to respond to a story that has not entertained him, Marshall frequently focuses on some familiar domain he finds in the story and uses it to build a response made up of descriptions or explanations of his own experiences and knowledge that the domain brings to mind. For example, he responds to the story "Heat Lightning" by presenting a description of what he imagines Geneva, the main character, and her home look like. His response is a description based, not on a series of details in the text, but on his own previous observations of "typical" Appalachian women and landscapes. As an informant, Marshall represents the reader who is for the first time given the opportunity to respond freely to literature. In his case, this freedom appears to promote his acquired methods of responding by praising or dismissing literary texts on the basis of how well they entertain him and by isolating specific textual features and using them to create what he calls his own "pictures."

Like Marshall, Ruth Ann is happy with her move to Southern Appalachia; but, unlike Marshall's frequent references to his new home, her responses to the stories contain little commentary on the relationships she sees between the area where she and her family now live and the settings of the stories. Although she does identify with the situations of characters who move form one location to another, Ruth Ann's responses to the stories are more strongly influenced by her family background and religious training. She represents the type of reader whose responses to the content of literature generally involve direct statements of approval or disapproval as influenced by the cultural components of her own moral and religious beliefs. In addition, her tendency to focus immediately on a limited number of culturally familiar features of a story affects her response to the selection to the extent that those features keep her from considering other possibilities for response and interpretation. Like Marshall, she finds the freedom of personal response a welcome change form her previous classroom experiences with literature. However, within such a free atmosphere for response, her inclination to express definite opinions on how characters should conduct themselves, along with her acquired expectation that a story should always be fast-paced and exciting, often causes her to form responses that do not exhibit consideration of the total text of the story she is reading. She even chooses to ignore her apparent knowledge of literary analysis when given the opportunity for free response. Ruth Ann, as an informant, is a reader whose firm beliefs and values appear to dominate the kind of experience she has with a literary text, no matter what the nature of its content.

Readers Who Have No Previous Direct Contact with the Culture Depicted in the Stories

The third category of informants in the study was readers who had not previously resided in or had direct contacts with the geographical region depicted in the stories. I originally hypothesized that this category of students, because of their unfamiliarity with cultural features of the stories, would address in their responses how their lack of identity with aspects of the cultures of the texts had affected their experiences with the literature. My hypothesis was incorrect in that neither Richard nor Toni, the informants, directly focused on any lack of familiarity at all. As in the cases of the other four informants, I discovered specific cultural influences from Richard's and Toni's backgrounds that appeared to determine the ways they took and expressed meanings from the stories.

In his interaction with the six stories, Richard finds sources of culturally familiar features in such aspects of the content as family relationships, religion, and characters moving from one location to another. Recognition of these features, however, becomes not only the basis for his responses to the stories but also a welcomed opportunity for him to discuss, both in oral and written response, his personal feelings and opinions on subjects that are important to him. Rather than being a reader whom the teacher might expect to focus primarily on the unique cultural content of the Appalachian stories, Richard basically ignores this aspect of the literature. Instead, in his way of responding to the stories, he is a reader who responds to literature by using it as a springboard for voicing his own views and beliefs. He has always used this method of response, and it is one that he states met the approval of his former teachers. He exhibits no concern that his responses more often than not are based on a single feature from the text of a selection. In fact, he emphasizes that one of the main joys he gets from reading literature is being able to discuss the ideas that a particular selection makes him think about.

The other member of the third category of informants, Toni, also expresses no difficulties with the stories because they take place in a region with which she had no familiarity until coming to Belvedere College. Like the other informants, Toni responds to the stories by focusing on familiar features in each selection, by emphatically expressing opinions on the situations the authors present and by evaluating the stories on the basis of her personal expectations of how a story should be written and of the kind of subject matter that she would like to it to contain.

However, Toni contrasts with the other informants in that she approaches the texts of the six stories in a more holistic manner, evidencing in her responses that she has not immediately latched on to single features of a selection at the total expense of others. Because she indicates that general reading and the study of literature are not important components of her cultural background, Toni's approaches to reading a story have likely been influenced by other factors. She is a person who, while so young, has not only lived in many different places but also has experienced a much greater variety of life experiences than the typical eighteen-year-old college freshman. The nature of her responses to the stories seems to indicate that Toni experiences a written text much as she has learned to approach any new situation in her own life--closely observing and evaluating it and then, without any reluctance, expressing her honest feelings about what she sees. The fact, then, that these stories take place in Appalachia really does not become a factor in Toni's reading of them. In her responses she appears to look beyond place and time and focuses generally on such personally familiar themes as death, loneliness, honesty, and boredom.

Implications of the Study

Applying ethnographic methodology to the six research questions that structured this study has allowed me to describe the influences of the culture of the reader and the culture of the text on reader response to literature. My findings support Petrosky's (1985) explanation of the interaction of reader and text as a multidimensional and unpredictable process. The study illustrates how, within this process, the cultural backgrounds of readers affect the ways they take and construct meanings from literature and then express them in forms of oral and written response. Moreover, the application of anthropological perspectives on culture, with emphasis on Spradley's (1980) definition of culture as "the acquired knowledge people use to interpret experience and generate behavior" (p. 6), has resulted in a study that describes what occurs when a group of readers enter into the world of a series of texts, participate in that world, and share their responses to the experience.

The main conclusion that I have drawn from my study is that, in terms of its influence on the response process, culture has the potential of being a resource as well as a constraint in an individual's interaction with a text. This observation is applicable to both the cultural influences of reader and text and has become the basis for my thoughts on the implications of the study.

The findings in the study illustrate that, when readers discover in their initial encounters with a text cultural features that parallel their own, they enter into the culture the author is depicting with a sense of identity and familiarity. Such an experience provides motivation and interest in the reading; however, in this initial stage of the reading act the culture of the text and the culture of the reader meet and, as in any transaction, a complex, unpredictable interplay of cultural elements begins. In some cases, the familiarity readers have with the text's culture could possibly continue to provide schema, cognitive maps, and insights that would heighten the quality of the transactions that they experience with the text. On the other hand, the interplay of cultural elements during the reading act can, as my study illustrates, involve limiting or distracting factors. In literary selections readers may initially discover a cultural scene so familiar that they feel as though they are witnessing, as the informant Daniel expressed, "a picture of my own life." However, as these readers move further into the text, their expectations related to story schema and/or content, acquired through their cultural background, may not be met; or individual domains of the selection, possessing special cultural meanings or associations for the readers, may be emphasized at the expense of a more holistic consideration of the text.

Based on the findings of this study, I see that readers' familiarity with the culture depicted in a literary work opens wide the door for them to enter into its "inner world" (Spradley and McDonough, 1973, p. xv); but once the readers are inside that world, their own cultural backgrounds become the dominant influence on what they observe and how they respond to their experiences with the text. While readers who are not familiar with the culture they encounter in a literary selection may not experience such initial interest in and identification with the content, they do not, my study indicates, interact with the work in ways that are necessarily different from any other readers. Based on a review of all of the findings in my study, I conclude that in the act of reading a work of literature, the various components of readers' individual cultural backgrounds have a greater influence on the kinds of interactions and responses they experience than do the cultural elements depicted in the text.

In terms of this important influence of the reader's culture on response to literature, the findings from my study support and illustrate Rosenblatt's (1938/1983) discussion of problems often associated with "the personal contribution of the reader" (p. 108). Specific findings illustrate Rosenblatt's statement that "The impact of the literary work is dulled when the reader brings to the text a fund of ready-made, sharply crystallized ideas and habits of response" (p. 97). Such ideas and habits, as exhibited by the informants in my study, are derived from cultural features of readers' regional, home, community, school, and religious backgrounds. In addition, because the study illustrates that these "ready-made" or stock responses can exist in so many various forms, my research gives additional validity to Rosenbaltt's directive that teachers must be attentive to this type of negative influence on students' experiences with literature.

Moreover, my study makes clear that students value the opportunity to respond freely to what they read and enjoy relating their prior knowledge and experiences to what they discover in literary texts. Rosenblatt (1938/1983) calls this opportunity the "first step" (p. 108) in helping students achieve a positive, rewarding experience with literature. What must follow, she emphasizes, and what my study has shown that readers too often neglect, is for students to learn to be more critical of their own responses, to base their responses on a total rather than a partial consideration of a text, and, as Rosenblatt states, "to develop flexibility of mind" (p. 104) so that learned restrictive habits and expectations will not continue to interfere with their literary experiences. My study explicitly illustrates that even a series of responses that a reader has to a single literary text often is based on a few isolated features of the work.

I see that one way teachers can help students give more holistic considerations to literary works is through the type of domain analysis of texts and student responses that I have used in this study. Not only can teachers learn much by comparing a domain analysis of a text to the domains students address in their responses to it, but they an also gain much insight into how their students are reading by considering the text's domains that the students do not mention in their responses. Teachers can use analyses of a class's initial responses to a selection to plan additional activities and assignments that can provide direction for students as they begin subsequent readings of the text. Also, from doing these analyses, teachers can obtain more perspective on how to plan future pre-reading or introductory activities when they teach the same selections to students whose cultural backgrounds will be similar to those students in their present classes. The purpose of such introductory reading activities is not to provide factual information or to lead students to read a selection in a specific way. Rather, these activities need to focus on key concepts and abstract ideas in a text that readers may or not have experienced within the contexts of their own cultural backgrounds. The objective of this kind of teaching strategy, as Smagorinsky, McCann, and Kern (1987) discuss, is to "provide students a format through which to wrestle with concepts in familiar contexts" (p. 3). In retrospect, I see that preliminary reading activities may have helped the students in my study to read and consider more holistically the Appalachian writers' depictions of such concepts as guilt, disillusionment, loyalty, independence, and maturation.

A final implication of the study has to do with the study of literature as a component of the English language arts curriculum. In terms of what it reveals about the interplay of the cultures of reader and literary text, my findings illustrate that the reading of literature needs to be looked at as a complex process in which cultural elements come together and result in specific, yet unpredictable, meanings for its participants. As related to the place that literature should have in today's K-13 curriculum, my research adds support to Hesse's (1989) recent observation that "the study of literature should be part of the broader study of how and why texts produce meaning" (p. 22).

Suggestions for Further Ethnographic Research

The findings of this study reveal the numerous roles that culture can play in determining how readers make and express meaning in their processes of responding into literature. The anthropological perspectives on culture, along with the ethnographic research model used in this study, present additional research possibilities for the study of the association of culture and reader response.

First, in order to examine further the influence of the culture of the reader on response to literature, the study needs to be replicated so as to describe the nature of the responses of informants, not only from additional experiential backgrounds but also from different age groups, such as middle school and non-traditional college students.

Second, reader response to other regional and ethnic literatures, as well as different literary genres, needs to be studied to provide more insight into how the cultures of texts affect response.

Third, this study reveals the importance of emphasizing in future research the influence of the culture of the reading event itself. While this study has focused on the roles that the culture of the reader and the culture of the text play in response, it became evident to me during the duration of the study that the actual social situation in which reader and text come together needs also to be given equal attention. Based on the model of ethnographic methodology in this study and on the research models used in the work of Beach (1973), Purves (1973, 1985), Hickman (1980, 1981) and Golden (1986), researchers can determine ways to investigate the reading event as another cultural scene that can affect response. Such research should involve determining, through participant and nonparticipant observations of the behaviors that are carried out by readers in particular locations at particular times, what cultural scenes emerge from various social situations, such as pair, small-group, and large-group reading and discussion sessions. A primary aim of this kind of research on the culture of the reading event should be to discover what cultural scenes promote and which inhibit the expression of individual readers' responses. In addition, because previous research has shown that a reader's responses to a single literary selection can change throughout subsequent readings, research on the culture of the reading event should also include descriptions of how readers' initial responses to selections compare and contrast with those resulting after re-readings and discussions that take place in social situations different from the one where their first encounter with a text occurred. Such investigation should provide valuable insights for teachers, especially in terms of instructional planning for literature classrooms.

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Appendix A: Student Background Survey Form

1. Your age?
2. Place of birth?
3. List the different places you have lived:
4. How long have you lived at your present location?
5. List the schools you have attended and their approximate size:
6. What are your parents' educational backgrounds and occupations?
7. Indicate your family's approximate income:
   ___below 10,000, ___10,000-20,000,
   ___20,000-50,000, ___above 50,000
8. Write a description of your immediate family:
9. What things about your own background are you most proud of?
10. Describe your attitude and feelings about the locality where you grew up:
11. Describe the community where you live:
12. Describe the place that literature and reading have had in your home, school, and community background:
13. Describe the place that religion has had in your background:

T: I think I just look at my life in general. And I really think there's always something more than what's shown. Yes, I always seem to read between the lines.

Appendix B: Excerpt from a Transcribed Interview

Informant: Toni
October 24, 1988
Researcher's Office

R: Okay. Toni, tell me what you think of the stories we have been reading in class.

T: Oh Lord, I think they're awfully realistic. Too realistic. When I first read them, I don't like them, but I don't really dislike them either. I don't think they're great. I don't think they're too exciting. I think I said a couple of times in my papers that, um, we, we live this kind of thing. You know, it's like what we live in life. Life is reality enough. I like to read. This is my personal view, but I like to read mysteries and adventures, that type of fantasy stuff that really isn't too realistic. And I love to go to movies. But I don't like reading realistic things all the time. I have to live it.

R: I see.

T: You know, I'm sure you can already tell, I love to read things into things. And I love to read between lines. But most of the time I get so upset with myself and so I stop doing it, but I'll be reading a story and I'll try to figure out, "Okay, that means something." Then I'll get to the end of the story and it didn't mean a darn thing. The story just ended. Blah. And I was just sitting there. And I'm wrong. First of all, I don't like that, and second of all, the fact that I predicted something and I was wrong and it actually turned out the normal way. But, um, I just think they're much too realistic. But still I can't say I don't like them.

R: Uh huh.

T: You know, I enjoy reading them, but I don't think they're superb. You understand what I mean?

R: Yes. Definitely. Have you ever read any stories, especially in terms of content, like these before?

T: No, I have not. That I can say. I have not. Never.

R: Do you think there's anything about the way you were taught to read literature that has caused you to pick out things that you think might be significant? Like you just mentioned?

T: Um, no nothing that my English teachers did.

R: You have just done that yourself?

Appendix C: Ethnographic Record
Assignment Sheet and Sample Ethnographic Record Laura Wrote on Her Pair Discussion of "Night Ride"

Assignment Sheet:

1. "Ethnographic" refers to the observation of people's behaviors and patterns of speech (including your own). By observing, we learn and we gain an understanding of the meanings of human behavior. The purpose of this assignment is to describe and explain as thoroughly as you can all that happened and that was said during a large-, small-, or two-member group discussion of a story.

2. Each record should be at least two pages. As you do these assignments, you will get better at listening, observing, and describing; therefore, the length of your records should increase during the semester.

3. During any of the discussions, you will need to take notes on who said what (include as many as possible of the actual words that individuals in the class or small group used. These words and phrases should be placed in quotation marks. Try to use names in your record, but especially here at the beginning of the semester identify individuals in any way you can--"the boy in the front row," "the student who is always late for our class," etc. Also describe gestures, facial expressions, and body language because these too are part of readers' responses to literature. Of course you can't record everything, nor should you. Just work to include the details that stood out to you and that you personally reacted to. Especially record statements that gave you insight into the story.

4. I am your audience, not the rest of the class. Do don't hold back on including all of your observations.

5. You are describing and reporting on a discussion of which you are a part. Do not forget to include your own thoughts, reactions, and most importantly, what you specifically contributed to the discussion, either orally or mentally (what you may have wanted to say but chose not to at that time).

6. When in the small groups, learn the names of your group members so that you can use their names in your record. Do the best you can in the class discussion (see #3 above).

7. In writing your records of the large-group discussions, I want you to please include what I say about the stories and how I react or respond to students during the discussion.

8. This assignment demands that you (1) take notes as well as share your own opinions and ideas during discussions and (2) that you write the ethnographic record as soon after class as possible so that you will not forget details.

9. I want each of you to become good observers of your and others' responses to and interpretations of the stories we will read. Let me see evidence of this in this records.

10. I will grade these assignments on how thoroughly you handle the first eight items in this list. Use of details is essential; in fact, this is more important in this assignment than editing. Quantity and quality of content are both important.

Laura
Ethnographic Record #3
Pair Discussion of
"Night Ride"
October 18, 1988

"Night Ride"

When Mr. Baker told us to select a discussion partner, Beth and I looked at each other at the same time. I was anticipating a thorough discussion of this story, and I knew Beth would be a good partner. I remembered, however, that she had disliked the other two stories, so I was a little concerned how she would respond to this one.

"I liked it," she said smiling. At this, I sighted in relief, knowing that if Beth took a positive attitude, the discussion would be rewarding.

"Me too," I agreed, "but why?"

"It was funny and serious; I thought Delmer was trying to be a father figure and a friend to Wilgus," Beth said open - mindedly.

"Great insight," I though, eager to respond. As usual, I had made a list of important points to discuss, and from the list, I gathered my response. "I loved how the author plunged into the funny stuff right from the beginning..." I said, giving a few humorous examples which would be inappropriate to discuss in writing! "His ideas and language relate to teens and make the story easy and enjoyable to read," I continued.

Beth added that there was not a lot of unneeded details like in the other stories, and I agreed that the details helped make the story effective.

I wondered if Beth would agree as I said, "I figured an accident or something bad would happen, but I knew nothing would because there was some sort of lesson to be learned or point to be made."

Beth nodded her head, but I could not tell if she agreed. Instead of responding as I expected her to, Beth changed the subject, "Wilgus knew what was going on with the woman in the house..."

"...but he was having too much fun to worry about it," I interrupted, sinking down into my seat and apologizing for my rudeness. Since I had already displayed my inconsideration, I continued, "Even though they were drunk, they talked seriously about Wilgus' father and old times." After saying this, I glanced down at the story, and ".38" popped off the page at me, leading to my irrelevant comment, "I just knew that someone was gonna' get shot."

Rather indifferently, Beth brought up another interesting idea, saying that she felt like Delmer was trying to step in and make Wilgus a man.

"Hmmm..." I responded. "I never thought of that, but you're right!" I dwelled on her idea for a moment, until my thoughts were interrupted by Beth's saying something about a movie she thought was similar, where a young boy was initiated into manhood. Even though I missed the movie's title, I understood how she related the initiation to Wilgus' experience.

At this point, I couldn't help but comment on the way Wilgus kept thinking about his grandparents back home. I saw the theme of guilt as a main importance in this story, and hoped Beth would agree. She did, and we chatted momentarily about the guilt theme throughout the story and how it affected, yet did not affect Wilgus' actions.

From there, the discussion continued with both Beth and I laughing as she said, "I enjoyed the funny parts that the author inserted for comic relief when Wilgus was sad and stuff." She added that Wilgus seemed to admire Delmer.

"Why would he admire a drunk?" I thought, but realized that he admired Delmer because he was the only father figure that Wilgus had to look up to. I then commented that Wilgus felt responsible enough to drive them home, then expressed my opinion of the relationship of this story to "Heat Lightning."

I knew, and was glad that Beth agreed as she said, "Yeah, because they both tried to get away from it all, but in the end had to go and face reality." I felt the exact same way, and smiled as I nodded in agreement.

Next, Beth said, "At first, I felt Wilgus would get killed and Delmer would feel guilty," but even though her ideas was creative, I disagreed, still sticking to my view that the author would not "kill off" a main character.

By this time, the pace of our discussion was slow, and we both realized that we had covered the main points. Out of curiosity, I asked Beth if she understood why they kept driving from town to town to town. She sort of snickered and said she thought their destination was the place where Wilgus' father and Delmer had worked together years ago. As I thought and realized she was right, I felt silly for skimming over a most important detail in the story. Oh well!

To kill time, I looked through the story and ended our discussion by pointing out parts of the story that I thought were creative attention - holders for teen readers. For example, the use of the the word "cruising," and the manner in which the author approached the description of the "urination" break!

The class was dismissed; however, I remained seated and took note of the ideas and opinions that were racing through my mind. The pair discussion was a marvel, and I was glad I had chosen Beth as my partner, for I felt we were able to relate and share somewhat the same interpretation of the story. I felt a sense of fulfillment, and was highly pleased with the outcome of the one-on-one discussion.

Appendix D: Example of a Domain Analysis Worksheet

Data Source: Interview #1 with Daniel (October 6, 1988)

Semantic Relationship: Attribution

Form: X is an attribution (characteristic) of Y

Included terms:	Cover Term:
not into much reading at all	Daniel's Dad
just flips through magazines	
reads the newspaper	
can't stand not doing anything	
always wanted me and my brother to have more than he did	
wants us to get a good education instead of having to work and stuff like he worked	
grew up on a farm	
began working in a car lot	
ended up a mechanic	
been working for a coal company now for about sixteen years	
went through the eighth grade	
quit school to help on the farm	
is a miner	
always lived around here	
is not working right now	
worked hard all his life	

Appendix E: Organizing Domains and Domain Lists for the Five Additional Stories

1. "Heat Lightning"

Organizing Domain: X is a Stage in Y
(Stages in Geneva's carnival day)

Domain List:

Characteristics of Geneva
Characteristics of Tammy
Characteristics of Wesley
Characteristics of Wesley Junior
Characteristics of the holler
Characteristics of Lois Ann
Characteristics of Mamaw
Characteristics of oil cloth
Characteristics of Mamaw's house
Characteristics of heat lightning
Characteristics of Anita
Characteristics of Anita's clothes
Characteristics of carnival music
Characteristics of the bottom
Characteristics of the carnival man
Characteristics of the mess of trailers
Characteristics of the airstream trailer

Kinds of bean
Kinds of weather
Kinds of roads
Kinds of houses
Kinds of things to be scared of
Kinds of lightning
Kinds of clothes
Kinds of carnival rides
Kinds of food
Kinds of money

Reasons for sitting on the porch
Reasons for Geneva feeling a change coming on
Reasons for Geneva hollering out in church
Reasons for Tammy putting hymn book over her face
Reasons for Wesley Junior beating his head against the wall

Reasons for Tammy getting wound up and crying
Reasons for going over to Mamaw's
Reasons for getting worn out listening
Reasons for Mamaw being mad
Reasons for Mamaw being scared
Reasons for Mamaw turning black

Reasons for Geneva not caring
Reasons for Geneva squeaking loud
Reasons for Lois Ann screaming
Reasons for Geneva throwing back her head and laughing
Reasons for Geneva feeling good

Results of hot weather
Results of hollering out in church
Results of Geneva telling kids they were not going to carnival
Results of Wesley hitting pickup
Results of Geneva listening
Results of rain and thunder
Results of getting struck by lightening
Results of seeing Geneva in shorts
Results of carnival setting up in the bottom
Results of Lois Ann having to go to the bathroom
Results of going to bushes
Results of Lois Ann screaming
Results of man asking Geneva into the trailer

Places in the holler
Places in the carnival

Parts of the mountain across the road
Parts of Mamaw's house

Parts of the Carnival

Stages in Geneva's day

Ways to answer Tammy
Ways to know there is a change coming on
Ways to take care of Mamaw
Ways to get away from the carnival
Ways to live in a carnival

as a cinder
Reasons for the bottom changing

2. "Night Ride"

Organizing Domain: X is a Stage in Y
(X is a stage in Wilgus' ride with Delmer)

Domain List:

Characteristics of Delmer
Characteristics of Wilgus
Characteristics of Grandmother
Characteristics of Pauline
Characteristics of Pauline's house
Characteristics of the homeplace
Characteristics of Glen
Characteristics of Glen's letters
Characteristics of slag heaps
Characteristics of the Nashville radio station

Kinds of houses
Kinds of guns
Kinds of cars
Kinds of roads
Kinds of beer
Kinds of junk
Kinds of rubbers
Kinds of trees
Kinds of keys
Kinds of gestures
Kinds of nights
Kinds of letters
Kinds of music
Kinds of buddies

Reasons for stopping at Vernon's house
Reasons for Wilgus' stomach rising up toward his heart
Reasons for being thrilled
Reasons for Wilgus driving
Reasons for shooting
Reasons for passing on a curve
Reasons for seeing a man about a dog
Reasons for pulling shade down
Reasons for celebrating the night
Reasons for sweet thrills running up Wilgus' back
Reasons for keeping letters
Reasons for grandmother lying awake
Reasons for cursing

Results of blowing horn

Places to keep pistol
Places to keep rubbers
Places to keep junk
Places to get beer
Places to play basketball
Places to cruise
Places to take a piss-break
Places to dump slag
Places to burn slag
Places to sit down and talk
Places to sit and think
Places to shoot
Places to drink beer
Places to dig coal

Parts of a house
Parts of a car

Stages of Wilgus' ride with Delmer

Ways to drive
Ways to express feelings
Ways to fire a gun
Ways to work in a garden
Ways to pass a car
Ways to celebrate the night
Ways to wait on Delmer
Ways to describe life

Places in Finley County
Places in Letcher County
Places in Kentucky

Results of driving fast
Results of parents dying
Results of thoughts about messing around
Results of shooting pistol
Results of coming home
Results of being smart
Results of listening to music
Results of Delmer passing out

3. "The Proffitts in Chicago"

Organizing Domain: X is a Stage in Y
(Stages in the Proffitt's move)

Domain List:

Characteristics of Zollie
Characteristics of the Critchers
Characteristics of Dorman
Characteristics of Dorman's farm
Characteristics of the hills
Characteristics of Marvella
Characteristics of Marvella's mother
Characteristics of the car
Characteristics of Chicago
Characteristics of Goose elk
Characteristics of Juanita
Characteristics of Juanita's apartment
Characteristics of Juanita's meal
Characteristics of Juanita's job
Characteristics of the alley
Characteristics of the sky
Characteristics of Marvella's description of the alley
Characteristics of the little kids

Kinds of earth
Kinds of mud
Kinds of lungs
Kinds of laughter
Kinds of chatter
Kinds of eyes
Kinds of hills
Kinds of roads
Kinds of houses
Kinds of birds
Kinds of trees
Kinds of food
Kinds of apartments
Kinds of jobs
Kinds of flowers

Reasons for kids loving Zollie
Reasons for Pa questioning the move
Reasons for Pa beating sty railing

Results of last hog dying
Results of strife between Marvella and Pa
Results of poisoning and blight
Results of mountain air
Results of urging kids to take final look at mountains
Results seeing girls' nakedness on TV
Results of having to stay in Chicago
Results of Marvella's picture
Results of a long trip
Results of telling kids about flowers and trees

Places to get a job
Places to put garbage
Places to park car
Places to sleep
Places to wash
Places to make money
Places to keep hogs
Places to migrate
Places to have an inside toilet
Places to have a TV
Places to play catch-ball

Parts of tar-paper house
Parts of Chicago
Parts of Great Smokies
Parts of apartment
Parts of alley
Parts of Marvella's description of the alley

Stages in the Proffitt's move

Ways to sit in a car

Places in Goose Elk

Reasons for Pa's face looking too old
Reasons for Pa not seeing what is best for family
Reasons for not leaving the hills
Reasons for going to Chicago
Reasons for Zollie singing
Reasons for Marvella's embarrassment
Reasons for Marvella creating a picture for Pa
Reasons for Pa taking a nap

Places in Chicago

4. "First Day of Winter"

Organizing Domain: X is a Stage in Y
(Stages in Hollis' day after talking with Jake)

Domain List:

Characteristics of Hollis
Characteristics of the farm
Characteristics of mother
Characteristics of father
Characteristics of Jake
Characteristics of the parsonage
Characteristics of the family
Characteristics of the kitchen
Characteristics of the car
Characteristics of the land
Characteristics of Hollis' hands
Characteristics of the state home
Characteristics of the house
Characteristics of the meal
Characteristics of Jake's letter
Characteristics of Jake's pictures
Characteristics of squirrel liver
Characteristics of mother's singing
Characteristics of father's breathing
Characteristics of the living room
Characteristics of the sun

Kinds of food
Kinds of weather
Kinds of animals
Kinds of music

Reasons for sitting by the window all night
Reasons for asking Jake to take parents
Reasons for going hunting
Reasons for car not starting
Reasons for Hollis being stuck
Reasons for Hollis not making his own way
Reasons for Hollis not being happier
Reasons for Hollis thinking of Jake
Reasons for Hollis thinking of state home
Reasons for laughing

Results of mother not bathing
Results of car sitting too long
Results of scraping knuckles on hood of car
Results of insanity
Results of Jake not taking parents in
Results of thinking of Jake
Results of thinking of what Jake said about the state home
Results of Jake's letter
Results of Hollis telling parents he asked Jake to take them in

Places to sit
Places to get money
Places to go hunting
Places to take parents

Parts of the day
Parts of the farm
Parts of the house
Parts of the car
Parts of a squirrel
Parts of a fox

Stages in Hollis' day after talking with Jake
Ways to take care of parent
Ways to replace car engine
Ways to walk
Ways to hunt
Ways to hide blood on hands
Ways to rest
Ways to treat folks in a state home
Ways to be calmed

Places in Harper's Ferry

Reasons for father crying
Reasons for father asking Hollis, "How could you do such a goddamned thing as that?"

Results of Jake building a tomb for Hollis
Results of blood being too thin in mother's veins
Results of farm failing
Results of talking to Jake

5. "Offerings"

Organizing Domain: X is a Stage in Y
(Stages in the visit from Sandra's mother and grandmother)

Domain List:

Characteristics of Grandmother
Characteristics of Mamma
Characteristics of Sandra
Characteristics of Jerry
Characteristics of a bird
Characteristics of the living room
Characteristics of Joe
Characteristics of Grandfather
Characteristics of the kitchen
Characteristics of ducks
Characteristics of the meal
Characteristics of the past
Characteristics of That's Entertainment
Characteristics of the night

Kinds of illnesses
Kinds of duck expressions
Kinds of desserts
Kinds of trees
Kinds of sounds
Kinds of offerings
Kinds of insects
Kinds of lies
Kinds of flowers

Reasons for coming to the barn
Reasons for calling dog to the house
Reasons for pressing Grandmother to talk about the past
Reasons for cutting trees
Reasons for operating
Reasons for bird dying
Reasons for noticing cobwebs
Reasons for not moving
Reasons for delaying supper

Results of childbed fever
Results of Mama and Grandmother coming to visit

Places to grow vegetables
Places to live
Places to admire the view
Places to eat
Places to thow cigarette
Places to find ducks

Parts of a house
Parts of the supper

Ways to see things
Ways to make tomato sauce

Stages in the visit from Sandra's mother and grandmother

Appendix F: Summary Overviews of the Five Additional Stories

1. "Heat Lightning"

As Geneva sits in a straightback chair on her front porch stringing pole beans on a newspaper in her lap, she feels like she is moving through a dream. She has felt like a change is coming on every since she hollered out "Amen" and "Tell it!" in church last Wednesday. She sees her little boy, Wesley Junior, as dark like herself and all her family away off in West Virginia, throwing rocks at cars and trucks going by. Tammy, her daughter, is complaining to her because they are not going to the carnival that has been set up in the bottom at the fork of the road. Geneva finishes the beans and sits awhile in the heat. Later in the house as she washes the beans, she hears the kids fighting with Lois Ann, Tammy's friend. She sits down at the table, traces the oilcloth pattern with her finger, and thinks that nothing is worth getting up for. Tammy yells to her that it is "fixin' to rain." Geneva goes out to see the rain coming and then goes over to her mother-in-law's company house across the ditch.

Finding Mamaw already in bed waiting for her, Geneva gets in bed and holds her like a child on her lap. Lightning is the only thing the old woman is scared of, and Geneva always holds her like this when a storm comes. Smelling like old rags and snuff, Mamaw tells Geneva about being struck by lightning when she was eight or nine. As she describes herself passing out and turning black as cinder, the thunder and lightning stop; and Geneva gets up and walks straight out of the house. She sees that the rain did not amount to a thing; the storm was only thunder and heat lightning.

In her house, Geneva goes to her room and locks the door. She pulls out the suitcase that Anita, Wesley's brother's wife, left when she ran off with Bull Hopkins. She pulls out a halter and shorts, types of clothing she has never worn before, and puts them on. From a sock she takes out money she is saving to buy curtain material, along with Wesley's silver dollars. She hollers for Tammy, Wesley Junior, and Lois Ann and tells them they are all going to the carnival after all. She says goodbye to the house and thinks that the carnival will be gone tomarrow.

Geneva and the kids hear the noises of the carnival. She is still walking in her dream; but when she sees colors at the carnival so bright that they hurt her eyes, the dream ends. After getting their tickets, they begin riding rides and eating and drinking. Geneva squeals as loud as the kids. Later they go to the tents where the games are. Geneva thinks that everyone is calling out to her. Lois Ann needs to go to the bathroom, but they are told there are no public restrooms. A concession man tells them to go back where the trailers are. After Lois Ann comes out of the bushes, she screams and points to a man watching them from one of the trailers. Geneva sends the kids back to the carnival, but she continues to stand there looking at the man who is now grinning at her. When he asks her to come in and visit awhile, Geneva grins back and then runs as fast as she can back to the carnival rides. She sees the children and then thinks that she could have gone into the trailer and never come out. She throws her head back and laughs, and everyone looks at her. Geneva feels good and sits down, stretches her legs, and gets some sun.

With the tickets gone, Geneva and the kids start back home. On the way Tammy gets sick, and everything she throws up is pink. Arriving at the house, they find Wesley sitting at the kitchen table drinking beer. Geneva knows that he is fit to be tied. She makes cornbread and sets the table. She makes Tammy take Mamaw some cornbread. As she puts the beans on the table, Wesley makes a grab for her and says, "Gotcha!" But Geneva slips right by him and calls everyone to come and eat.

2. "Night Ride"

Delmer pulls up in front of his mother's house and blows the horn. His thirteen-year-old nephew, Wilgus, comes running out the back door carrying his jacket. His grandmother is chasing him; but by the time she reaches the steps, Wilgus is climbing into the car. Delmer scratches off in the Ford, leaving gravel flying and his mother screaming, "You be careful with that child!" Delmer yells back laughing, "See you later."

Soon Delmer slams on the brakes and disappears into cousin Vernon's house. He returns with a paper bag containing two six packs of bootleg beer that he hands to Wilgus. Then he hands him a pint of whiskey he has in his pocket and tells him to put it in the glove compartment. While Wilgus is shifting Delmer's pistol around to make room for the bottle, a package of Trojan rubbers falls out onto the floor. Wilgus puts it back in the glove compartment and closes the door. Delmer is searching the dial on the radio. While they are listening to "I Wonder How The Old Folks Are At Home," Wilgus opens a beer with a church key, settles back in the corner of the suicide seat, and watches the world flash by. He and Delmer wave at the boys in front of Cottrell's store. As Delmer hits dips in the road, Wilgus sticks his head out the window and yells "Wheeee." Suddenly Delmer tells Wilgus to take the pistol out; and with Wilgus steering, Delmer begins shooting roadsigns. Later as they are rolling along toward Hindman, Wilgus looks out the window at people working in their gardens and thinks about his grandparents. He feels a little sad but is too excited to brood.

After almost hitting a Studebaker, Delmer brings the Ford to a stop in front of a little dwelling house. Wilgus watches as his uncle goes in. He sees a blond woman at the door and then a hand pulling down the window shade. Sitting in the car, Wilgus hears the creek warbling in the dark and thinks about how far he is from the homeplace. He then hears Delmer come storming out the house cursing at the woman. He gets in the car and roars off furiously. He takes a drink of whiskey and almost hits a car full of drunk men and boys. Wilgus looks over at Delmer and notices how much he looks like Wilgus' dad, Glen. Delmer stops the car and says it is time to take a piss-break. He and Wilgus fire off a few rounds from the .38 to celebrate the nice night.

Later Delmer wants to show Wilgus a place where there is a slagheap; and as they get close to it, they feel the heat from the burning slag. They sit down close to the slagheap and in between drinking and shooting the pistol begin talking and shooting the shit about life, love, philosophy, and things in general. Delmer tells a few war stories and begins talking about Glen. He tells Wilgus to keep Glen's letters and to keep reading them. After Delmer shoots the pistol again, Wilgus asks him about the woman. He tells him that he and Pauline may get married but says that he has told her that he is a son of a bitch. When Wilgus tells him that he is not, Delmer suggests they go back to the car and listen to the radio. The late-night Nashville station is playing music that reminds Wilgus of his grandparents. He thinks of his grandmother who is probably waiting up for him. He thinks of the ocean that had once covered these hills and of his daddy who used to dig coal over 20 years ago. He thinks of the slagheap fire that may burn forever.

Looking at Delmer and finding that he has passed out, Wilgus drinks the last drink of whiskey and feels confident that he can drive the car home. He rakes the empty beer cans onto the roadside and puts the empty pistol in the glove compartment. Pushing Delmer over enough to get to the wheel, he starts the car but forgets to take the handbrake off. Finally he wheels the car in a circle and heads back down the valley toward the homeplace.

3. "The Proffitts in Chicago"

Marvella Proffitt and her father stand watching the last of their hogs dying in its pen. Marvella feels the inability to communicate with her father. Standing there with him in silence, she thinks of Zollie, her big and blowzy step-mother, and the effects she has had on the family. Zollie's most recent idea has been for the family to pull up stakes at Goose Elk and migrate to Chicago. Thinking that this hog is their last tie here, Marvella says to her father, "Well, that's the last of them." Her father replies that the Critchers have killed the hog. It is their kind of work. Marvella tells him that they all want to move and that they are waiting on him to say when. Dorman, her father, says the farm is all they ever had that was their own. He questions how they can leave it. Marvella looks at the silent hills and tells him that they should go tomarrow. As she hears Dorman express his wish that he could ask Marvella's mother her advice, Marvella looks at his old face and the milky veil over his eyes. Looking at her father's leathered and creased face, she thinks that the flatlander's belief that mountain air tones and glows complexions is not true for Dorman. Leaving her blind father beating his fist on the pig sty railing, Marvella goes and sits on the car fender and looks at the hills but does not see them.

Marvella is sitting in the backseat of the car and Zollie is driving the entire family down the winding mountain road to the main highway that will take them to Chicago. Marvella tells her four little brothers what their new home will be like; and Zollie tells the family that city people, unlike the old Critchers down in the holler, do not fight with each other. Marvella urges the family to take a final look at the mountains, but they just laugh and say they don't care. As Marvella thinks she does not car either, she sees her father with his head out of the window and thinks he might be crying.

After three days of traveling, sleeping in the car, and washing themselves in filling-station restrooms, they reach Chicago. They go to the apartment of Zollie's sister, Juanita. She feeds them a meal of slumgullion and light bread and then shows them their new apartment over her own. The kids discover the bathroom and the television. While Zollie reaches into the bodice of her dress to get money to pay the first week's rent, she talks with Juanita about helping her get a job as a maid. Marvella gets embarrassed at a girl's nakedness on the television. Then she sees her father sitting near a window. Hearing her coming to him, Dorman asks her what is outside the window. Marvella sees a gray, grim wall and a littered alley where their begrimed car is parked. Already two hub caps are missing. Where the sky should be are the heads of tall buildings, and above these is thick, oily, unmoving smoke.

Marvella knows what her father wants the view to be like. She thinks to herself that the country drove them out and that her family can make money here. Because they have got to stay here for awhile, Marvella decides that she must say to Dorman that there are trees and birds and flowers out there. An imaginary scene comes into her mind; and as she describes it to her father, she hears him release a sigh and ask for something to prop his feet up on so he can take a nap. Marvella thinks she will have to tell the kids about the flowers and trees growing in the alley. She will have to create the picture for them. She knows they will not snitch on her. And neither will Zollie, although she might laugh. Marvella knows that Zollie understands things when she wants to.

4. "First Day of Winter"

Hollis has been sitting by the window all night staring at his ghost in the glass. After his talk with his brother Jake yesterday, he feels like a tomb has been built around him. He had asked his brother to take his parents to live with him and his family in their parsonage at Harper's Ferry, but Jake told him he did not have the room. He hears his parents downstairs getting breakfast. His mother is giggling, her mind half gone from blood too thick in her veins; his father is blind. Hollis goes downstairs and drinks some coffee but eats nothing. He tells his father that he is going out to work on the car.

While trying to get the car to start, he sees his father coming toward him. The car will not start; and after looking under the hood, Hollis sees a hairline crack along one side of the engine block. He has no tools to pull the engine and no engine to replace it. He suggests to his father that maybe Jake could loan him the money for a new car, but the old man tells him they can get by without bothering Jake. Hollis tells him that he asked Jake to take them in and that he feels stuck here on the farm. His father tells him that the farm can make a way for him and that everybody, it seems, is trying for something better. Hollis tells his father to go inside out of the cold, and he decides to go hunting.

Walking across the pastures and ridges, Hollis thinks to himself that Jake has sloughed everything on him. Momentarily, he feels happier and begins killing squirrels. He field-dresses each one and soon feels drained from all the killing. The heavy game bag weighs him down. Stopping to rest, he sees a fox in the thicket. As he aims and fires the rifle, he thinks of Jake. He misses and the fox runs away. Hollis feels old and tired. He thinks of what Jake said about the state home he could put the folks in. They starve them there, Jake had said, and in the end smother them. Hollis wonders that it would be like to smother them, but catches himself and laughs. He pulls on his gloves to hide the blood on his hands and begins running to a clearing. The light mist of sweat on his face calms him as he walks on home.

Entering the house, he sees his parents listening to the radio. His mother comes to him, and he hands her the bag of squirrels. While he washes his hands, he sees her drop the squirrels in the brine and then lick a trace of blood from her and and smile. Later the three sit down to eat at the kitchen table and Hollis listens to his parents talk about Jake's letter they have received and pictures he sent of his family. Hollis looks out the window and again tells his parents that he asked Jake to take them in. He sees tears in his father's eyes and hears him say, "How could you do such a goddamned thing as that?" Hollis goes out in the yard and looks at the cracked engine block. The wind beats on him, and the snow blackens the sun. He goes back in the house and stretches out on the couch. Listening to the soft rasp of his father's crying breath and his mother's broken humming of a hymn, Hollis lies in the graying light and sleeps.

5. "Offerings"

In late summer Sandra, anticipating a visit from her mother and grandmother, notices the cobwebs hanging from her ceilings. As she sees a fly go by trailing some cat hair and dust, she thinks of what her grandmother once said about the danger of letting dust bunnies take over your house. Sandra and her mother have agreed not to tell Grandmother Stamper about Sandra's separation from Jerry. All they will tell her is that he is working night shift at K-mart in Louisville. Sandra sees the women walking down the ragweed-bordered path to her porch.

The dog pokes at the crotch of her grandmother's white pants suit. The three women talk about the raccoon Sandra saw one night and the white cat that she fears has been shot. With the screen door slamming behind them, they enter the kitchen. Grandmother walks around examining the rows of shoes and the hunting knife. Sandra realizes she is looking for Jerry. Sandra feeds her cats and goes outside to shoo the ducks in from the pond, but they will not leave. Returning to the kitchen, she sets the table as the other two women stand around with starved looks. Sandra tells them that she is collecting duck expressions, and the women tell her about the expression "duck soup." They eat on the porch amid some moths and mosquitoes. While the women praise her meal of chicken and fresh vegetables, Sandra notices that her dishes do not match. During the meal she calls the dog into the house and begins pressing her grandmother to talk about the past, especially about the day the trees on her grandmother's farm were cut.

Later she serves butterscotch pudding for dessert but does not eat any herself. She wishes instead she could have a bourbon-and-coke. After supper, when Grandmother is in the bathroom, Sandra's mother asks her about Jerry. Sandra tells her that she is through waiting on him and that she does not know how long she can keep up the night-shift lie. Her mother reminds her that Grandmother thinks Jerry hung the moon and then comments on Sandra's cosmos. Sandra tells her that she did not even thin them because she hated to. Her mother responds that it always broke her heart to think corn, but she learned.

While the women watch a Fred Astaire movie, That's Entertainment, on TV, Sandra makes tomato sauce. After pouring the sauce into bowls to cool, Sandra looks at the bowls and thinks they look like bowls of blood. She asks her mother to go to the barn with her to help with the ducks. Walking down the path to the pond, Sandra sees her mother, who will not smoke in front of Grandmother, happily lighting up a cigarette. Two cats and the dog walk along with them. The ducks are still on the pond, unwilling to leave. Sandra thinks that she would not care if the wildcat she has been hearing would take her ducks. They would be her offering. In the peaceful night setting she thinks of the thousands of golden spiders hidden in the field; and she imagines herself in the early morning bouncing with an excited spring from web to web, all the way up the hill to the woods.

Appendix G: Cultural Scenes Identified by the Informants in the Five Additional Stories

Cultural Scenes Identified by Each Informant in "Heat Lightning"

1. Daniel

Geneva is at home with her children. Tammy, her daughter, is trying to get her to take them to the carnival. She knows something is going to happen because she hollered out in church. She knows a change is coming on. She thinks about how hot and dry it has been this summer. Tammy still tries to persuade her mother to go to the carnival, but she will not go. Wesley Junior hollers that it is getting ready to storm. Geneva then runs across the ditch to Wesley's mom's house. The woman is mad at Geneva for being slow. She is scared of storms, so Geneva sits with her. After the storm Geneva goes home and changes clothes. She gets Tammy and Wesley Junior, and they all go to the carnival. Tammy also gets one of her friends to go. Geneva uses her curtain money and buys the kids anything they want. A man at the carnival makes a pass at Geneva. When everyone is back together again, they start home. Geneva's husband is waiting for them and is mad, but when he sees they have been to the carnival he changes his attitude.

2. Laura

Geneva is sitting on the porch, stringing beans, and taking care of her children. She feels like something is up. Her daughter, Tammy, is begging her to go to the carnival. A storm comes, and Geneva goes to stay with her mother-in-law until it is over. Then she goes home, puts on shorts and a halter, and tells the kids they are going to the carnival after all. She tells her kids they can take anyone they want with them. As they start walking, Geneva looks back and says, "Goodbye house." At the carnival Geneva feels like she is in a dream. She sees the trailers that the carnival people stay in; and one man asks her to come into his, but she runs away. Geneva feels free but soon collects her children and goes back home. When they arrive, her husband is waiting for them, and Geneva begins preparing supper.

3. Marshall

Geneva is stringing beans on the porch as she watches Wesley Junior throw rocks at cars driving by. She starts thinking about Sunday at church when she hollered out. Tammy, her daughter, is begging to go to the carnival. Geneva thinks about the weird feelings she is having, when suddenly a storm comes up. Geneva decides to take the kids to the carnival anyway, and they get ready to go. Geneva plays games with the children and wins a panda for Tammy. Lois Ann, Tammy's friend, has to go to the bathroom, so Geneva takes her back where the trailers are. A man in one of the trailers almost picks Geneva up, but she runs away. Soon, she and the children leave the carnival. They go home to find Wesley Sr. waiting. Geneva makes some cornbread for supper.

4. Ruth Ann

Geneva is snapping beans. She recalls how she yelled out in church last Wednesday night. Her son, Wesley Junior, is playing in the dirt and throwing rocks at vehicles as they go by. Her daughter, Tammy, comes out of the house and pesters her mom to take them to the carnival. Geneva finishes the beans and just sits there. Later she goes into the house and washes the beans. She remembers how she could always tell when something big was about to happen. She has this feeling now. It starts to storm, and she goes over to Wesley's mother's house. Mamaw is scared of lightning because she was struck by it when she was a child. Geneva holds her until the storm is over and then goes home. She puts on a pair of short shorts and a halter top and takes the kids to the carnival. They ride all of the rides, buy toys, and eat cotton candy. Geneva is having a good day, doing anything and everything. She almost goes into a trailer with a man from the carnival, but she doesn't. She finally feels free. After awhile she takes the kids home, and Wesley is there. He makes a grab for her, but she gets away and fixes dinner.

5. Richard

Geneva is stringing beans and wondering about the weather. She daydreams about the day she hollered out in church. She is watching her children, and her daughter is bothering her to go to the carnival. She finishes the beans. Tammy, her daughter, keeps going on about the carnival, and then it starts to rain. They all go over to Wesley's mother's house across the ditch. Mamaw tells a story about lightning hitting her and her house. Then Geneva goes back home. Geneva unpacks some clothes, puts them on, gets money, and tells the kids they are going to the carnival. At the carnival Geneva and the kids spend lots of money. Tammy's friend, Lois Ann, has to go to bathroom; and when Geneva takes her back where the trailers are, a man makes a pass at Geneva. Finally, they go home where Wesley is waiting for her. She finishes dinner for Wesley and the kids.

6. Toni

Geneva and her two children, Tammy and Wesley Junior, are at home. Tammy asks her mother if they can go to the carnival, and Geneva says no. A storm hits, and it is raining, thundering, and lightning hard. Geneva goes over to her mother-in-law's home and comforts Mamaw during the storm because she is scared of lightning. After the storm Geneva goes back home. Geneva puts on short shorts and a tube top and takes the children, plus one extra, to the carnival. She even takes her savings for curtains and her husband's silver dollars that he has had since he was a teenager. At the carnival, Geneva takes Lois Ann, Tammy's friend, to the bathroom. There are no public restrooms, so finally they go behind the bushes. As they are ready to return to the carnival, they see a man staring at them. Tammy and Lois Ann go off to ride rides, but Geneva stays. The man invites her into his trailer, but she refuses. Finally, they all go home. Wesley sees where they have been but is not angry. They eat dinner.

Cultural Scenes Identified by Each Informant in "Night Ride"

1. Daniel

Wilgus has left with his uncle, Delmer, in the car. They are drinking beer. Delmer stops at a woman's house and later comes running out mad. He and Wilgus go on down the road where they almost hit another car. They stop to take a break, shoot Delmer's gun, and then go on. They go to a burning slate pile and sit around talking about different things. They drink some more and shoot the gun into the slate pile. Delmer passes out in the car, and Wilgus sits there thinking about what they have done that night and how he liked it. Wilgus decides to go back home. He moves Delmer over and starts driving.

2. Laura

Wilgus' uncle has picked him up in his car, bought some beer, and the two are taking off somewhere. Both the child and his uncle are drinking. Delmer stops at a lady's house, but for some reason is angered by her. He returns to the car, and he and Wilgus continue their journey. They stop later on at a burning slate dump, and Delmer tells Wilgus that it has been burning for a long time. They talk about Wilgus' father, Glen, and Wilgus asks Delmer about the woman he had stopped to see. Wilgus enjoys the night with Delmer, but later Delmer passes out, so Wilgus decides to drive the trick back to the homeplace.

3. Marshall

Delmer and Wilgus are driving around drinking beer. Delmer shoots his .38 pistol while driving. On the way, Delmer stops to visit some woman while Wilgus waits in the car, still drinking. Delmer storms out of the house twenty minutes later cussing. They take off in the car again and nearly wreck. Later they stop and urinate on the roadside. Then they decide to shoot the pistol some more. After driving on down the road, they stop at a slag mine that is burning. Here they talk about Glen, Wilgus' father, and shoot the pistol into the fire. Wilgus then asks Delmer who the woman was. They get back in the car, and Delmer passes out in the front seat. Wilgus moves him over, clears out the beer cans, and drives home.

4. Ruth Ann

Delmer goes and picks up his nephew Wilgus. They stop and get two six-packs and head on down the road. Delmer drives wildly and drinks a couple of beers. Wilgus, who is thirteen, has a couple too. Delmer shoots up a couple of street signs, while Wilgus steers. They pass a Plymouth and almost hit a Studebaker in the oncoming lane. Delmer stops at some woman's house and tells Wilgus to wait in the car. In about twenty minutes, he comes flying out of the house furiously. He hops in the car and they speed off again. He has a few drinks of whiskey and then stops on the side of the road so they can use the bathroom. Delmer then shoots up the countryside some and lets Wilgus finish the round. Later they stop at a slate dump where they sit and watch it burn. They drink and shoot into the fire and talk about anything and everything, but especially about Wilgus' dad. Back in the car Delmer passes out. Wilgus takes a sip of whiskey and decides that he will drive them home. He shoves Delmer out of the way and heads toward the homeplace.

5. Richard

Delmer and Wilgus are joy riding with a couple of six-packs. They are shooting a .38 pistol and driving fast to who knows where. After they cruise awhile, Delmer stops at a woman's house. Wilgus thinks something is going on, but then Delmer comes out of the house cursing and mad. Back on the road, they almost hit another car of drunks and then stop for a pee-break and target practice. They get back in the car and Delmer takes Wilgus to a slaghead of fumes and fire. Here they sit around and chat and then fire a few rounds into the fire. They talk more, and Wilgus has lots of things going through his mind. Delmer passes out, and Wilgus attempts to drive them home.

6. Toni

An uncle and his nephew go out and pick up two six-packs to go out and party with. Delmer, the uncle, pulls up to a house and Wilgus, the nephew, waits contentedly. Knowing that Delmer is visiting a female, he leans back, listens to the car radio, and drinks. Delmer soon comes out of the house upset. The two males take off again in the car. As they are driving, they have to pee, so they stop along the road. Then they shoot some with Delmer's gun and get back in the car. They stop again later on and talk and shoot some beer cans. They talk philosophically, and Wilgus asks his uncle about the woman. His uncle tells him they might get married some day. Wilgus keeps thinking about his grandparents. Later Delmer passes out in the car seat. Wilgus gets into the driver's seat, chucks the empty beer cans, and takes off for home.

Cultural Scenes Identified by Each Informant in "The Proffitts in Chicago"

1. Daniel

The last of the Proffitt hogs has died. Marvella Proffitt thinks about her step-mother, Zollie. She talks to her father about moving to Chicago. She believes that the country is driving them out of their home. Soon they begin their journey to Chicago. Her little brothers have a lot of questions to ask about the city, but they already think people there are rich and that they will be rich too. When they arrive in Chicago, Zollie's sister, Juanita, has an apartment for them. Marvella's father, who is blind, asks her to tell him what she sees outside their apartment window. She imagines trees and flowers and describes the scene to him. She knows that if she tells him the truth, he will want to go back to the mountains.

2. Laura

Dorman Proffitt is a young--yet old--blind man whose wife has died and who has remarried. He loves his new wife but cannot shake the memories of his deceased wife. His eldest child, Marvella, feels it is time for the family to pack up and move away from the homeplace; however, she is having a difficult time convincing her father. Soon, though, the family is journeying toward Chicago, away to a new life. Everyone except Dorman has high hopes about their move. The family arrives in Chicago and finds their apartment. Out of the windows Marvella sees filth, tall buildings, and smog. Dorman asks Marvella to tell him what she sees outside. She describes beautiful trees, flowers, and sky and thinks of the success and new life the family can have in Chicago.

3. Marshall

The Proffitt's last hog takes a last breath from its poisoned lungs. The hog is the Proffitt family's last tie to their slowly deteriorating home in Goose Elk. Marvella, the eldest daughter, is begging her father to move to Chicago. Soon the Proffitts are packing up their cream-colored, rust-spotted car, and Zollie, Dorman's wife, is driving them to Chicago. Marvella tells the other children that there will be big stores and that Zollie is going to be a maid at a big hotel and make lots of money. The family arrives in Chicago, only to find themselves in a pink four-room apartment. The children entertain themselves by flushing the toilet and watching TV. Zollie and her sister, Juanita, who has found the apartment for them, discuss the rent money. Marvella looks out the window and imagines that the tall buildings are trees.

4. Ruth Ann

The Proffitt family's last hog has died, and the eldest child, Marvella, is telling her blind father that she, her step-mother, Zollie, and the other children are ready to leave the homeplace in Goose Elk and move to Chicago. Dorman loves the country but finally gives in. Soon the family is packed up and on their way to Chicago. The father is the only sad one in the bunch. In Chicago they go to Zollie's sister's apartment where the kids play with the toilet. Dorman asks Marvella what is outside the window. She sees dirt, refuse, and a lot of signs of poverty, but she does not tell Dorman what she sees. Instead she tells him that there are trees and flowers outside so that he will not want to go home.

5. Richard

The last of the Proffitt's hogs has died, and Marvella, the oldest child, is trying to convince her father that it is time to leave the farm and move away from the mountains. When the family finally does pack themselves into the car and head off to Chicago, they have conversations about what Chicago will be like. Dorman, the father, does not say anything. When they get to Chicago, they go to their apartment, and the kids like it. Dorman still has nothing to say except to ask Marvella to tell him what she sees outside the window. Marvella describes for him trees and flowers behind a big white fence. He leans back in a chair and sighs.

6. Toni

The Proffitt's last hog has died, and their crops are dying too. Maybe the Critchers are responsible. The Proffitt children are ready to leave for Chicago. The father, on the other hand, is hesitant. His new wife, Zollie, has come up with the idea of going to Chicago. Dorman gives in, and the family gets in the truck and takes off. The young ones are questioning Marvella, the oldest child, and Zollie about the number of people they will meet, all the big stories they will go in, and all the friends they will have. They believe there will be no fighting in Chicago. Zollie and Marvella encourage their picture of Chicago. When the family arrives in the city, they go to their apartment. The children immediately run to the bathroom, while Zollie and her sister, who also lives in the building, discuss financial matters. The kids are engrossed with the toilet and how it works. Meanwhile, Marvella's father asks her to tell him what she sees outside. She sees a gray sky, an alley, trash, buildings, and a wall. She, however, tells him that there are trees and flowers and goes into detail in her explanation of them. After she finishes, her father relaxes and sits back to rest. Marvella decides that she must get a hold of Zollie and the children to let them know they have to relate the same description to her father.

Cultural Scenes Identified by Each Informant in "First Day of Winter"

1. Daniel

Hollis lives with his parents. His mother is half crazy, and his father is blind. Hollis tells them at breakfast that he is going to work on the car. His father wanted him to go hunting. Hollis finds that he cannot fix the car, and he and his father have a small argument. He tells his father that he asked Jake, his brother, to take them in. Since he cannot fix the car, he goes hunting. While gone, he kills some squirrels and gets blood on his hands; and upon seeing a fox, he pretends it is Jake and shoots at it. He has come crazy thoughts while in the woods. Back at the house, while they are eating, Hollis tells his parents what he had asked Jake to do. His father starts crying. His mother later helps his father into the living room to take a nap. Hollis goes outside but soon comes back in and goes to sleep.

2. Laura

A sad family lives on a farm. The mother is senile, and the father is blind. There are two sons who feel hopeless. Jake, one of the sons, refuses to take his parents in, leaving his brother, Hollis, solely responsible for taking care of them. Hollis feels like Jake has put him in a tomb. It is December, and the first blue blur of morning grows behind the tree branches. Hollis is angry and takes it out on his father. The anger is caused from his feeling that he has to stay there and take care of his parents. Later he goes hunting and seems to take his frustrations out on squirrels. He sees a fox and imagines it is Jake. He returns home in the late, dark evening and goes into the house where his parents are waiting for him.

3. Marshall

Hollis lives with his mother and father and takes care of them. He feels alone and feels like it is a burden for him to have to stay with his parents. He has begged his brother, Jake, to take them in, but Jake told him that he does not have enough room. Hollis goes out to fix the family car and notices a hairline crack in the block. He knows that he does not have enough money to fix the car. His father asks him to go hunting, so, not being able to work on the car, he goes and shoots many squirrels. Soon his game bag is full. Before he gets home, he shoots at a fox. Returning home, he gives his mother the squirrels, and she prepares them, licking the blood from her fingers with delight. After their meal, Hollis sits with his parents. His mother brings out pictures of Jake and his family. Hollis tells his parents that he asked Jake to take care of them but he said no. This upsets his father. His parents go to bed, and Hollis goes outside and prays.

4. Ruth Ann

Hollis feels like he is in a tomb. He gets up and goes to the kitchen to eat breakfast. His mom and dad are already there eating oatmeal. His mom will not bathe, and she is not all there mentally. His dad is going blind. After breakfast Hollis goes out to work on the car. He finds that he cannot fix the car and complains to his father that the farm is dragging him down with all of its responsibilities. His father tries to comfort him, and Hollis goes hunting. He kills several squirrels and heads home, thinking about what it would be like to kill his parents. When he gets home, he hands his mom the squirrels to clean and goes out to wash his hands. The family eats dinner, and Hollis tells his father that Jake will not take them in. His father starts to cry because Hollis wants rid of them. Hollis goes outside for a little bit and then comes back in and takes a nap. His parents have gone to take a nap too.

5. Richard

Hollis has asked his brother, Jake, to take his parents in, but he refused because of financial problems and the size of his family. Hollis' parents are a problem because his dad is blind and his mother is unmannered. He goes outside to work on an old car that has not run for a long time. His father comes out and they argue because Hollis has asked him to borrow money from Jake or the bank, and his father refused. Hollis stops work on the car and goes hunting for squirrels. He kills some and also tries for a fox. He thinks of smothering his parents but then laughs and heads for home. He gives the squirrels to his mother to cook. A letter from Jake arrives, and Hollis upsets his dad when he tells him what he asked Jake to do. Later Hollis goes outside but soon comes back in and lies on the couch thinking of all the things he needs to do on the farm. He goes to sleep.

6. Toni

Hollis stares at his ghost in the glass of the window. He is looking for some way out of the tomb that his brother, Jake, has built for him. At breakfast with his mother and father, he only drinks coffee and is in a hurry to go out to the car to get it running. As he is working on the car, he scrapes his knuckles under the hood. His father comes out to him. They discuss asking Jake to buy a new car.

His father does not want to do this. Hollis tells him that he has asked Jake to take him and his mother in, but Jake has refused. Hollis feels sorry for himself and feels trapped on the farm. They head back into the house. Later Hollis goes hunting for squirrels and kills quite a few. He sees a fox and compares it to his brother. He really resents Jake, and for an instant thinks about killing him. He also has a thought about what it would be like to smother his parents. Arriving home, he notices the blood on his hands as he gives the squirrels to his mother to fix. As he watches her clean the squirrels, he sees her lick some blood from her fingers. Jake has sent pictures of his family, and the parents make comments on how well Jake has done. Hollis again tells them that he asked Jake to take them in. His father gets very upset and begins to cry. As his mother takes his father into the back to comfort him, Hollis lies down and takes a nap.

Cultural Scenes Identified by Each Informant in "Offerings"

1. Daniel

Sandra's mother is bringing her grandmother out to see her. Sandra's house is in bad shape. She does not want her grandmother to know that she is separated from her husband. The two women arrive, and Sandra's grandmother notices the dirt and looks around for Jerry, Sandra's husband. Sandra and her mother tell her that he is working overtime on the night shift. Then they eat supper. A long time after supper, Sandra's grandmother talks about old times and how she took care of her husband. When Grandmother goes to the bathroom, Sandra's mother asks Sandra if she has heard anything from Jerry. She tells her no and that he had better not come back. While her grandmother watches television, Sandra and her mother go to the pond to get the ducks in. Her mother lights a long-awaited cigarette. The ducks will not come in, so Sandra and her mother stand at the pond and listen to the sounds of the night.

2. Laura

Sandra is poor and separated from her husband. She is expecting her mother and grandmother Stamper to come visit. When they arrive, her grandmother discreetly looks for Jerry, but Sandra does not want to tell her they are separated. Her grandmother sees Jerry's rifle on the porch. Sandra prepares supper in her nasty house. Bugs are on the plates she puts on the table. Sandra and her mother leave her grandmother and walk down to gather the ducks in. They cannot get them in, and Sandra stands by the pond thinking what it would be like to live the life of a trouble-free spider.

3. Marshall

Sandra is separated from her husband. As she is waiting for her mother and grandmother to come and visit her, she thinks of her maternal grandmother dying of child-bed fever and her mother developing an infection after Sandra's birth. When they arrive, they tell her how nice everything at her house is, but it is not. Sandra serves them supper. Later on while her grandmother is in the bathroom, Sandra and her mother talk about Jerry. It is getting late, so Sandra and her mother walk down to the pond to try and get the ducks in. Her mother sneaks a cigarette while she is away from Grandmother Stamper. The ducks will not leave the pond, so Sandra and her mother leave them.

4. Ruth Ann

Sandra's mom and grandmother are coming to visit. Her mom had a hysterectomy and likes to smoke. Her grandmother remarried after the death of Sandra's grandfather. Sandra never dusts. When the women arrive, they notice how run-down Sandra has let her place get. Grandmother keeps looking for Jerry, Sandra's husband, from who she is separated. Sandra does not want her grandmother to know this. They have dinner on the porch. After they finish, Sandra wants her grandmother to tell her about life on her grandparents' farm. Later she and her mother talk while they do the dishes. Sandra makes tomato sauce and then asks her mother to help her put the ducks up. The ducks will not leave the pond, so Sandra and her mother stand outside enjoying the night. Sandra tells her about hearing a wildcat scream. Her mother smokes a cigarette and then throws it in the pond.

5. Richard

Sandra and her husband, Jerry, are separated. Sandra's house needs lots of repairs. She owns lots of cats and has a garden. Sandra's mother and grandmother come to visit her and notice all the bad things about the house, but Sandra is not bothered by this. They eat and talk about Sandra's grandmother's farm and about Jerry, whom Grandmother does not know has left. Her mother and grandmother watch TV while Sandra makes tomato sauce. Later on, Sandra and her mother go to the barn and then to the pond to see the ducks. Sandra thinks about tomorrow.

6. Toni

Sandra's maternal grandmother died of childbed fever at the age of twenty-six. Sandra leads a humdrum life. She grows vegetables and counts her cats. She never dusts. She lives on a farm out in the middle of nowhere. There is beautiful scenery, such as a hill with apple trees and a small forest. Sandra thinks about the bird on the stump she rescued from a cat. Her mother and grandmother come to visit her. She makes dinner for them; she fixes fried chicken, corn and tomatoes. Later she feeds her cats and complains about the ducks not coming in. The three females go into duck sayings. Her grandmother offers to wash the dishes, but Sandra refuses. Her mother asks her if she has heard anything from Jerry, her husband. Sandra says no and comments about being tired of waiting on him. On television the women watch Fred Astaire. Sandra starts the dishes, and the other two women continue to enjoy the music. When Sandra goes out to get the ducks, she asks her mother to help. Her mother tells her, "There's no way to drive ducks in from a pond." Then Sandra responds, after a mention of wildcats eating the ducks, that "they are her offering." Her mother throws her cigarette in the pond. It is a peaceful night as Sandra thinks of thousands of golden spiders and how they will come out with the sun in the morning and jump on their webs as if they were trampolines.

Appendix H: Statements the Informants Made About the Cultural Scenes They Identified in Each Story

1. "The Return"

Daniel:

1. You know, it seemed that it was just like my life
2. It was almost exactly like what I do when I go home
3. I could relate to it and understand it fine
4. It was so much like my life, I couldn't believe it
5. My grandparents are just like the ones in the story
6. The story was just like home to me
7. I feel that anyone from the country can relate to this
8. It is a picture of my own life
9. I have experiences like this every time I go home

Laura:

1. I enjoyed reading the story
2. I liked it maybe because I have experienced the same excited feeling after coming back home from a trip
3. It relates to virtually everyone--the idea of being back home with the ones you love
4. The grandfather is a typical older man
5. The grandmother is a typical complaining older lady
6. The conflict between the grandmother and grandfather is common
7. I like the relationship Wave has with his grandparents because I have that kind of relationship
8. Wave felt at home even among the bickering because he was in familiar surroundings with the ones he loved
9. Wave is mature and has patience with his grandparents
10. The country-like accents used by the older folks relate well to the kind of people they are

Marshall:

1. It is an incident from a normal person's life
2. Wave is just a normal college student
3. Wave has normal everyday grandparents
4. What happens to Wave didn't have much significance; it's kind of a memory that could come to someone maybe after hearing a song or seeing a familiar place
5. I could picture the farm
6. I could relate to Wave's feelings throughout the story
7. I find nothing unusual about a college student going to visit his grandparents

8. Wave is typical

Ruth Ann:

1. I thought it was ridiculous
2. It was a letdown
3. Wave just goes out and plays and frolics in the yard
4. The story was, overall, dumb
5. Wave is pretty comical
6. Wave's manners are lacking
7. I think wave is crazy for being so giddy over the situation at his grandparents'
8. I didn't relate to it because my grandparents are healthy and full of life
9. I don't think it was necessary to mention Wave listening to his great-grandmother use the bathroom
10. The story could have taken place in our area because of the dialect
11. Wave realizes how much he cares for his relatives, but he is irresponsible and immature

Richard:

1. It brought back memories of my grandparents' home and the way they are
2. Mamaw Little reminds me of my grandfather from a religious aspect
3. I could picture Wave driving
4. When the grandmother and grandfather fuss at each other, the phone rings. That always seems to happen to people
5. I hate to see old people just do nothing but talk about dying
6. Wave leaves the house to get away from all the mess around him. I would have done that too.
7. I like the story because it's sorta related to church-type things, and I'm into that.

Toni:

1. It was boring because nothing exciting happened
2. The ending is peaceful and kind of nice
3. It was not typical for me
4. I do not and cannot relate to any part of the story
5. The basis of it is a college student comes home to his family

2. "Heat Lightning"

Daniel:

1. I don't understand why Geneva changed
2. I do not like the story; it changed around too much
3. There are some parts of the story that don't seem to fit

4. I did not understand the first part of the story, so I could not relate to it
5. It was almost like reading two different stories
6. I did not like it nearly as much as "The Return"

Laura:

1. It tells about the simple lifestyle of a woman who appreciates her family and shows them her love
2. I enjoyed the fact that Geneva wants so much more but in the end remains content with the way things are
3. I appreciated Geneva and the way she lives
4. Geneva desired to change her life
5. The carnival is important because it is one time Geneva didn't have to worry about money, and she loved it
6. The family is poor and speak with an uneducated accent

Marshall:

1. It was kind of boring and slow
2. I could picture the home--kind of like a home in a coal camp
3. I enjoyed the thoughts I received from the story
4. I liked how Geneva set all her work aside and took the kids to the carnival
5. I found the dialect amusing
6. Geneva is a typical, hard-working woman who always dreamed of a better life, but it was out of her reach
7. Geneva makes do with what she has
8. It is a picture of a poverty-stricken mother and her family

Ruth Ann:

1. I enjoyed it
2. I think that what Geneva does is shocking, but I wouldn't be surprised if this sort of thing happens quite often
3. I wouldn't have expected Geneva to do the opposite of everything she had done before
4. If anyone needed a little excitement, this woman did
5. Geneva went off the deep end
6. Geneva's life is in a rut; she has a routine for everything
7. The story held my attention
8. It seems set back in the country, a rural area
9. I can see how Geneva's boring and routine life finally got to her
10. I could not understand how she could blow all of her husband's money

Richard:

1. I found this to be a neat story
2. The family is poor, the kids are nerve-wracking, and the chores are multiplying, but they attend church
3. I felt like I was actually there when I read it
4. The carnival scene was an interesting experience but pretty sick, if you ask me
5. I thought at first that the family was black; not many white folks holler out in church
6. It's sad that Geneva takes the money just to satisfy the kids
7. The kids are you typical spoiled brats

Toni:

1. I enjoyed it
2. The part about the grandmother's fear of lighting is peculiar
3. I can relate to Geneva because I like for life to be spontaneous and impulsive
4. The ending is pleasant but boring
5. Geneva enjoyed what she did that day

3. "Night Ride"

Daniel:

1. I really enjoyed it
2. It is about a real-life thing
3. This kind of thing takes place quite often where I live
4. My friends and I have done things similar to this
5. I have gone out like this with some of my friends some nights to take a break and have a good time
6. I could relate to it and that made it more enjoyable
7. Delmer tries to play a fatherly role
8. It really shows Delmer and Wilgus' relationship

Laura:

1. I liked it
2. The purpose is to reflect on memories, especially the memory of Glen
3. I love the funny stuff in it
4. I laughed out loud at the rubbers
5. I relate to it because it is something many teens do
6. It is sweet that even though they are drunk, they sit there and talk seriously
7. Wilgus felt bad about running off from his grandparents
8. Wilgus showed a great deal of maturity when he drove home

9. Delmer is a free-spirit with a loud, exclamatory voice and vulgar expressions

Marshall:

1. I loved it
2. I could almost feel intoxicated like Wilgus
3. It kind of had me on edge, because I don't know what was going to happen
4. The characters have southern accents
5. Delmer represents the hillbilly type who enjoys having a good time and is without a care in the world

Ruth Ann:

1. I did not like the story
2. It is filled with nothing but two people who get drunk and go flying down the highway
3. I was not impressed or entertained
4. Delmer is wild and a bad influence on Wilgus
5. I feel sorry for Wilgus out drinking and carrying on
6. Wilgus is too young to realize what he is doing
7. Wilgus does not stand much of a chance in life
8. It is sad that Delmer seems content to hide his problems in a can of beer
9. Delmer is inconsiderate to his parents
10. Maybe Delmer is drinking to forget his brother
11. Delmer fighting with his girlfriend and then talking about getting married is typical
12. The boys not having anything to do other than getting drunk and watching a slate dump burn reinforces a West Virginia scene to me
13. It reminds me of West Virginia
14. It hit closer home than I really want to admit, because some of my relatives don't have any remorse about drinking
15. I just want to shake Wilgus and tell him how stupid it is to drink
16. It gives me a feeling of hopelessness

Richard:

1. At first, I thought the whole idea of them joy riding was funny
2. When they started to drink, I felt uneasy
3. I don't like Wilgus being taken out by an adult who should know better
4. I rally got disturbed when Delmer started to shoot a .38 and use foul language
5. I disapprove of this, because it goes against everything I believe in
6. I don't relate to it
7. They see like hillbillies, moving from county to county within only a few minutes of driving
8. The three rednecks playing basketball on a dirt road are hillbillies

9. It kind of got to me
10. I disapprove of Delmer's immoral contribution to a minor
11. If there is one thing Wilgus does not need to be introduced to, it's driving while drinking
12. It goes against my moral standards
13. The language offended me
14. It had the language of a hundred hicks in barroom
15. The names of the characters are typical hick names

Toni:

1. I enjoyed it because I can relate to some of the situations
2. It was good
3. It's wild
4. It's about getting drunk in a truck, while driving wildly and suspecting a bit of sexual intercourse taking place
5. The characters' names depict a country background
6. Delmer is spineless and boring
7. It's realistic
8. It left me hanging

4. "The Proffitts in Chicago"

Daniel:

1. I didn't really like it
2. There needs to be more background information
3. None of the family's problems were bad enough to make them leave
4. Their new life is not at all like they thought it would be
5. I can see how the country drove them out
6. They didn't have anything left in the country
7. Marvella made a mistake when she lied to her father
8. Marvella wanted her father to stay in the city, but she didn't wnat to hurt him
9. I don't like Zollie; she appears to be a mean step-mother

Laura:

1. I like it because it is a success story
2. I respect Marvella's mature decision to tell her father there is beauty in the city
3. Zollie plans the move because she probably feels sorry for the family
4. Marvella chose to create Utopia-like surroundings for her father
5. The country-like language of the Proffitts makes them stand out like a sore thumb in the city
6. I feel Zollie and kids wanted much more than the country offered
7. Marvella sees her father's happiness as one key to a successful life in Chicago

8. The whole family is blind about the move
9. There is nothing left in the country for the family
10. It does not hurt for Marvella to stretch the truth to save her father's feelings
11. Poverty like the Proffitts have still exists
12. It made me aware of the problem of poverty in our society

Marshall:

1. I picture the Proffitts as a deep southern country family
2. I admire these people but also feel pity for them for taking on such a challenge
3. I can't really relate to this, but I can imagine myself in the same situation
4. I wonder if there are really people like this in the world today
5. It is believable

Ruth Ann:

1. I like it because I can relate to it
2. I can understand why Marvella and the other kids wanted to get away from the country
3. I can see how you can get tired of living where you are and want a change
4. They wanted a change, which is something I can relate to
5. The family was inconsiderate toward Dorman's feelings and love for the country
6. It's hard to pull up your roots if you don't want to
7. I have mixed feelings about Marvella lying to Dorman
8. Sometimes it's hard to know what the morally correct thing is to do
9. There are a lot of things at stake here, and the questions of right and wrong is not so clear-cut
10. I think Zollie was sick and tired of country life
11. I have a warm feeling about this

Richard:

1. I found it interesting
2. I saw the family's poverty and what they had to do to survive
3. Dorman's love of the farm and the mountains did not mean as much to the rest of the family
4. As in Chicago, too many cities have put nature behind a big white fence
5. They could not stay in the country because everything they lived off of was gone
6. I didn't realize Dorman was blind when I first read the story
7. Like the Proffitts, people tend to lean more toward ideals
8. People often have to experience tragedy before they make a change
9. The only way the family can survive is to move to Chicago
10. I related to this because I've moved many times

Toni:

1. The Proffitts are a typical country family
2. It made me sad
3. I disliked the fake, idealistic pictures that the children were getting
4. I felt so much for the father who was lied to
5. I can't see how lying to someone is good
6. Marvella carries much responsibility, but I strongly disagree with how she handles it
7. I disliked the story because of the subtle way in which something that was so detrimental was condoned
8. I see realistic heartaches here

5. "First Day of Winter"

Daniel:

1. Hollis acted very cruel
2. His parents are holding him back, but they are still his parents
3. I can relate to this, but that doesn't make me like it
4. I don't like the way Hollis treats his parents
5. Hollis doesn't seem to care for his parents
6. I have very negative feelings about nursing homes
7. The whole story is sad

Laura:

1. I feel sorry for Hollis
2. Hollis feels smothered by his parents
3. Hollis resents Jake's success
4. Hollis is stuck between a rock and a hard place
5. Hollis would feel guilty if he left his parents
6. I admire Hollis for his patience and willingness to take care of his parents
7. Hollis feels like he is in a tomb because Jake leaves him with no choice but to take care of his parents
8. I felt sad when the parents kept waiting for Jake to come for Thanksgiving
9. I think Hollis appreciated the farm but resented the fact he had no other choice

Marshall:

1. I feel pity for Hollis
2. He has no future because he has to "sit" for his parents
3. The parents treat Hollis like he was made to take care of them
4. It isn't fair for Jake to leave Hollis stranded on the farm
5. Hollis is given too heavy a burden
6. It is a real-life situation

Ruth Ann:

1. I don't like it and could not relate to it
2. I have mixed emotions about Hollis
3. Hollis does not want to fact responsibility
4. Hollis is rude and blunt with his parents
5. I think he should be more compassionate and understanding
6. Hollis and Jake should discuss the situation, but Hollis could handle his parents on his own if he tried
7. Hollis doesn't show any love or affection at all
8. He needs to consider his situation as a chance to repay his parents for what they probably did for him
9. Being put in a nursing home would probably be better than the treatment Hollis is giving his parents
10. I have negative feelings about Hollis, but it's easy to pass judgment on a person when you haven't experienced what they have

Richard:

1. I almost felt I was there
2. I visualize the farm
3. I feel sorry for Hollis
4. Hollis is ashamed of what he does
5. He wants to move on to better things
6. I believe he loves his parents, even though it's not shown much
7. It's hard when your parents find more favor in an older brother or sister
8. I would not leave my parents in a situation like this one, but I do feel sorry for Hollis because he does not have a chance to be on his own
9. It was comforting because Hollis does love his parents
10. It would be hard to go through life knowing you could have made something better of yourself

Toni:

1. It is so sad
2. The situation gives me an unhappy, morbid feeling
3. I dislike the feeling I have after reading this
4. It is eerie and sad
5. Hollis feels like he got the short end of the stick

6. I did not like this much at all
7. This shows the pain caused when parents are too old to take care of themselves

6. "Offerings"

Daniel:

1. I don't really know if I like it or not, because there is so much of it I don't understand
2. Sandra's grandmother taking care of her husband and the bowls of blood Sandra sees are like parts of other things we have read
3. After reading it again, I still can't say that I like it
4. The naming of all the characters and the duck works is stupid
5. I don't know why all those people who are not in the story are talked about
6. I don't know why Sandra said it would be nice to offer her ducks as a sacrifice
7. I didn't get anything out of it
8. I did like the description of Sandra's place, but that was about all
9. Sandra dealt with stress by just being carefree but at times seemed a little crazy

Laura:

1. I am confused about the references to blood, death, and ducks
2. Sandra is a poor, husbandless young woman who tries to pretend she is someone she is not
3. Her grandmother is aware of Sandra's problems but sympathetically looks over them
4. Sandra tries to maker her grandmother think her life is peachy
5. Sandra longs for another kind of life
6. The offerings must have something to do with Sandra's miserable life and how she desires a change
7. "Offerings" makes me feel drained and confused

Marshall:

1. It is confusing
2. I don't know why there are references to Sandra's maternal grandmother dying and her mother developing an infection after Sandra's birth
3. I thought it was going to be about Sandra and her pregnancy
4. It is hazy and unclear
5. The situation seems ordinary
6. It is boring
7. Sandra wants to be isolated so she can have freedom
8. Her only real companions are animals
9. Sandra is lazy and maybe an alcoholic

2. Ruth Ann:

1. I am very confused
2. At first, I thought Sandra hated living in the country because she let her house and land get in a terrible state of disrepair
3. I think she has some negative feelings about the country because her grandfather died and his farm died too
4. the more I read the story, the more I like the grandmother
5. The grandmother is an immaculate woman who can't stand dirt
6. Sandra's mom is wimpy because she will not tell her mother-in-law about her hysterectomy, that she smoke, or that Jerry has left Sandra
7. The grandmother is sharp and see through all the pretense that is going on
8. It does hold my attention, but I'm still stumped about the story
9. The house is so dirty that even a fly gets dusty in it
10. I wonder if Jerry left because of Sandra's housekeeping
11. I don't think Sandra is a country person, because my idea of a country person is someone who tries hard to make his/her land the best is can be
12. Sandra's priorities are out of order; she cans tomatoes but lets everything else go
13. The ducks are an offering, but I don't know why
14. Sandra's terrible housekeeping bothers me; I believe in keeping a house clean and neat
15. Sandra appears to me to be lazy and actually enjoying living in the dirt
16. Sandra likes being without a husband and enjoys the way she lives

Richard:

1. It's dull
2. I don't understand it
3. I don't understand what the offerings are
4. Sandra is poor but could have kept the place cleaner
5. Sandra's situation is an everyday occurrence for some people
6. It's not good to hide things from your family like Sandra and her mother are doing
7. I could not understand them hiding the truth from the grandmother
8. My home would never look like Sandra's; I have to have everything in its place
9. Sandra's husband has left her, so maybe that's why she can't afford to fix or clean up anything

Toni:

1. I truly don't see much from Sandra, except that she enjoys her past and possibly longs for it
2. I enjoyed it, although death is mentioned in many forms over and over again
3. Sandra seems to be handling her life well
4. I think offerings are made every year, day, month, and minute; I am speaking of death as an offering
5. I don't know who the offerings are directed to
6. I enjoyed noticing all the offerings that are made in the story
7. The story is clearly one from the country
8. It is realistic and deals with sickness and death
9. It was strange and abstract, but I liked it.

VITA

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I was born April 4, 1946 in Ronceverte, West Virginia. I attended public schools in Monroe County, West Virginia and graduated from Greenville High School in 1964. In 1968 I received a B.S. in Education from Concord College, Athens, West Virginia with teaching fields in English and art. After teaching eighth and ninth grade English in Monroe County for one year, I began graduate work at Marshall University in Huntington, West Virginia. During my two years at Marshall, I was a graduate assistant in the English department. I received an M.A. in English in the spring of 1971.

Since completing my degree at Marshall University, I have taught at the secondary and college levels in West Virginia and Virginia and have completed additional graduate work at Marshall University, West Virginia University, and West Virginia College of Graduate Studies. In the fall of 1984 I began work toward a doctorate in English Education at Virginia Tech and taught part time in Tech's English department. This past fall I returned to my alma mater, Concord College, as an assistant professor of English.

I am a member of NCTE, VATE, and West Virginia State Reading Council. My publications include articles on the teaching of literature and language in the Virginia English

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